

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

Uttarpara Jaikrishna Public Library

Acc. No. 8524 Call No. 915.6
CAR
Processed by N. Sarkar on 17.9.75

RECOLLECTIONS
OF
TRAVELS IN THE EAST.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

STRATTON HILL; a TALE of the CIVIL WARS. By the Author of "Letters from the East." 12 3 vols. post 8vo.

"This novel is a spirited and striking memoir of these eventful times, as well as finely descriptive of Cornwall."—*Literary Gazette*.

"A production of the very highest order of composition, and amusing and instructive in the highest degree."—*Spirit and Manners of the Age*.

TALES of the WEST OF ENGLAND. By the Author of "Letters from the East." In 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

CONTENTS :—The Valley of the Lizard—the Miner—the Exile—the Legend of Pacorra—Wesley and his Disciple—St. Martin's Isle and the Power of Affection.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,

Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

RECOLLECTIONS.
OF
TRAVELS IN THE EAST;
FORMING
A CONTINUATION OF THE
LETTERS FROM THE EAST.

BY JOHN CARNE, ESQ.

OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

TO HIS FRIEND,

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, Esq.

THESE FEW AND SIMPLE RECOLLECTJONS

ARE INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Valley of Zabulon.—Hill-country of Juda.—Poor village.—Healthiness of the climate.—Ignorant priests.—Church at Tiberias.—Ill-fated English merchant.—Jews at the Lake of Galilee.—Plain of Gennesaret.—Mountains of Gilboa

Page 1—19.

CHAPTER II.

A Syrian town.—Dwelling of a native Prince.—House of a Syrian family.—Their mode of living and of entertaining the Author and his companions.—Departure thence.—Dreary appearance of the country.—Wretched village.—Ruined temple.—Village of El Furkah.—Devastation of the neighbourhood by war.—Greek priest and his solitary dwelling.—Ancient Dan of the Jews.—Source of the River Jordan.—Wildness of the scene.—Ancient waters of Merom.—Bridge of Jacob . 20—41

CHAPTER III.

Mount Carmel.—Bold and romantic scenery.—Spot where Elijah slew the prophets of Baal.—The river Kishon.—Squalid hut, in which the Author's party passed the night.—Insolence of the inhabitants.—Wild

minstrel.—Profligacy of the Arabs.—Departure from them.—Spot where the Prophet Elias lived.—Awful aspect of the scene.—Carmelite monastery here.—Remains of monasteries in the neighbourhood.—Village of Nain.—Village of Endör.—Fortress formerly held by the Crusaders.—Mean hamlet on the sea-shore.—Dwelling of the Sheich.—His family.—The Sheich's morning prayers.—Character of Oriental females.—Religious character of the men.—Attachment in misery of four young Turkish women.—Different sentiments entertained by Greeks in similar circumstances.—Ruins of Cesarea.—Feelings on journeying towards Jerusalem

42—72

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival at Ramla.—Picturesque ruins.—Difficulty in procuring a lodging.—Night in the public bazaar.—Life of a trader in this place.—The party resume their journey at daybreak.—Village of Lydda.—Barren hills.—Ruins of ancient edifices.—Small valley.—Wretched peasants dwelling in it.—Turkish mosque on the spot where the prophet Samuel was buried.—Attachment of the Turks to the burial-places of memorable characters in Scripture.—Ramah.—Ancient oak . . . 73—88

CHAPTER V.

Abou Gosh, the notorious Arab chief.—Extraordinary certificate.—Altercation between a Missionary and a Rabbi, in the valley of Jehoshaphat.—Pillar of Absalom.—Enthusiasm of the Missionary.—Interesting scene with the descendants of the ancient Rechabites.—People of Bethlehem.—Insurrection there.—Triumph of Abou Gosh.—Antonio, the Catholic guide.—French physician in Syria.—His intimate knowledge of Oriental

manners, passions, and enjoyments.—His house and manner of life.—Singular adventures in the East of a London merchant 89—134

CHAPTER VI.

Sepulchres of the rulers of Israel.—Picturesque country.—Groups of female peasants.—Valley of Ajalon.—Hopelessness of all attempts to convert the Israelites to Christianity.—Refuge from the rain in a cave.—Arrival at the western gate of Jerusalem.—Silence of the city.—The Jewish quarter.—Bathing-house.—Young Jewesses.—The bazaar.—Fondness of the Jews for wine.—Hamlet among the rocks.—Scene of the groves and altars raised by Solomon to false gods.—Grove of Moloch.—Sounds heard from the city.—Group of Jews at a fountain 135—155

CHAPTER VII.

Plain of Rephidim.—Tomb of Rachel.—Cave of Machpelah at Hebron.—Funeral processions of the Turks.—Degradation of the Jews.—Oriental cemeteries.—Area of the Mosque of Omar.—Dangerous adventure of the Author in intruding there.—Ceremony of washing the feet of the Pilgrims.—Adoration at the Holy Sepulchre.—Mixture of enthusiasm and cupidity on the part of the devotees, particularly of the Author's servant.—History of this man 156—174

CHAPTER VIII.

Sepulchre of the Virgin Mary.—Illumination of the interior.—Chant of the Monks.—Crowd of Pilgrims—Greek, Catholic, and Armenian altars.—Indecorous ri-

valry of the priests.—Discourse with two Catholic priests.—Tombs of Anna and Joseph.—Difference of feeling at the tomb of the Virgin, and on Calvary.—Narrowness of the streets in Jerusalem.—An ancient pool.—View of the city from an eminence.—Visit to Jerusalem of a noble English Lady, in male disguise.—The Author's apartment in a Convent.—A volume of Lord Byron's Works found there.—Narrow escape.—Visit to the Superior of the Convent 175—193

CHAPTER IX.

The Wilderness.—Pilgrims to the Holy Land.—Arab village.—Remains of the house of Zacharias, and of the Sepulchre of Elizabeth.—Difference in the demeanour of the pilgrims.—Wretched dwellings in the Arab hamlet.—Avarice and guile of the Armenian fathers.—Death of a wealthy merchant in the Convent.—Cruelty towards his servant.—Desert of the Evangelist.—Site of the ancient city of Tekoa, where the prophet Amos lived. 194—209

CHAPTER X.

Circuitous route to the sea-coast.—Scanty grove on the Mount of Olives.—Village of Emmaus, and Christian church there.—Plain of Ramla.—Reception at the town.—Visit to the Governor.—His singular story.—Massacre of the Mamelukes 210—223

EGYPT.

CHAPTER XI.

City of Cairo.—The Pyramids.—The Nile.—Cafila of slaves.—Dongola woman bought by a Turkish merchant.

—Female dominion in Turkey.—European adventurers at Cairo.—Disastrous adventures, and apostacy of an American.—Devotion in the wilderness.—Campaign in Senaar 227—256

CHAPTER XII.

Hassan, the Bedouin chief.—His attack and plunder of a caravan.—His capture and execution.—Desolation of his wives and children.—Dispersion of his tribe.—Allusion to the Author's captivity in the tents of Hassan.—Wanderings of the Israelites.—Scenes of their encampments.—Their numerous sufferings.—Region of Paran.—Progress to the Red Sea.—Scene of the miraculous passage 257—283

CHAPTER XIII.

Character of Mahmoud Ali.—Security throughout his dominions.—Favourite palace of the Prince.—Splendid kiosque in the garden.—Bath there.—Diversion of Mahmoud.—His attachment to European habits.—English lady at his table.—His favourite wife.—His cruelty towards a young Frenchman.—His prodigality of the lives of his people.—A French colonel.—French baker at Cairo.—Oppressive taxes.—Severe laws respecting sugar.—Grove of palm-trees.—Alarm of an Arab camp.—Hospitality of the Turks.—Striking example of this.—Vicissitudes of fortune sustained by the Emir Busheer.—Young Druse females.—Illustration of Scripture costume.—Greek war.—Residence in a Druse town.—Greek refugees.—A speculative Greek.—His coffee-house.—Costume and general appearance of the Druse soldiery.—Call of the Muezzin.—Lady Hester Stanhope's Arab

cook.—The Emir defeated by the Pacha of Damascus.—Sir Sydney Smith's advice to the Emir.—Flight of the latter.—His interview with Mahmoud at Cairo 284—324

CHAPTER XIV.

A Scotch renegade.—His prosperous fortune.—Chicanery of an Armenian bishop.—Interview with this dignitary.—Fraud of the noted Gearvé.—His luxurious mode of living on the funds of the Bible Society.—A few words on the Apocrypha question 325—339

CHAPTER XV.

Sabbath in Cairo.—Christian service administered by a Jewish missionary.—Scene of the encampment of the host of Israel.—Mounts Sinai and Horeb.—Spot where Aaron reared the first altar.—Cave where Elijah took refuge from the revenge of Jezebel.—Savage aspect of the vicinity.—Different manner of the Divine miracles in Syria and Palestine.—Natural basin in which the golden calf was cast.—Waters of Mara 340—348

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

VALLEY OF ZABULON.

THE valley we had now traversed for some hours was the most extensive, save that of the Jordan, we had yet seen, and was full of interest—it was that of Zabulon, and was inclosed by high mountains on the right and left. The valley was partially cultivated; here and there were small fields of Indian-corn and barley, and hamlets were scattered few and far between. The whole appearance of the country was less barren than what we had seen on the preceding

days, and discovered in many parts a wild and luxuriant richness, the wantonness of Nature, that might, with industry, have been turned to the most productive account. , But a supine, inactive, and desponding feeling is felt or shown by most of the half-barbarous inhabitants, who fear, with justice, that the fruits of their labours may be suddenly reaped by any of the oppressive or marauding chiefs who have the strongest hand at the moment.

This and many adjacent districts were anciently termed “ the hill country of Juda ;” a denomination which is quite descriptive of their present appearance. In the course of a few hours, passing near a small village, and being exhausted with the heat, we resolved to seek some rest and refreshment during the sultriest part of the day, and entered one of the cottages. The people began eagerly to set before us the best cheer they could command, in the prospect of being well remunerated. A dish of fried eggs, some butter and milk, soon made their appearance, all good of their kind ; and we afterwards gladly availed ourselves of the

shelter of the hut to take a short repose. The village consisted of about a dozen poor and scattered mud cottages, each with a small portico in front; it stood at the foot of the mountain, which here descended in steep and naked crags; patches of verdure were sprinkled thinly around the dwellings. A few goats and sheep, fowls, &c. conveyed an idea of some degree of comfort, which, however, was seldom enjoyed by these poor people, who, compelled to sell the animals, as well as chief part of their produce, live themselves on the coarsest food. The climate in this land must be in general healthy, as would appear by the many old men that are met in the apparent enjoyment of health and strength. This seems to have been the case in the times of Scripture, from the frequent mention of individuals who were well stricken in years, and still retained a good portion of their mental and bodily energy. Can there be a finer picture than that of one of the patriarchs, loaded with years, his beard and hair white as snow, but, with firm step and undaunted resolution, passing from place to place, or entering on long

journeys, with 'his children's children around him; his memory not failing, and refreshing slumber not passing from his eyes, or the warm affections from his heart?

In about two hours we again proceeded; the valley grew wider as we advanced, the mountains on each side more rugged, and the habitations ceased altogether, as the country became of a wilder aspect. The absence of dwellings was a pleasure rather than a dearth to the eye, so wretched was their appearance. Their interior was furnished only with a few wooden utensils of the rudest kind, some coarse mats to sleep on, and equally squalid coverings above. The Christian part of the population fares little worse than the Mahometans; in almost every one of their villages a poor and ignorant priest resides, who receives a support, chiefly in provisions, with little money, just sufficient to maintain him in a state of comfort not at all superior to that of his flock. These priests are mostly low and illiterate men, who are sent from different monasteries in Italy; for few who were of superior manners or education, or possessed a luxurious abode at home, would voluntarily become

exiles to such distant and dangerous scenes, where they are cut off from all society, and condemned to live a nearly barbarous life. The dwelling of the pastor is not to be distinguished from the rest, nor is the traveller guided there, as in more civilized countries, with the certainty of finding hospitality and entertainment. A small edifice, used as a church, but scarcely to be remarked as such from any external signs, sometimes stands beside the priest's house, but in many cases where the situation is precarious, no place of public worship is to be found. In such vicinities, the pastor's duty is confined to the dwellings of his flock. Some of these poor men do not hesitate to labour in the fields, or to do any thing to vary the monotony of their life, at which, however, they seldom murmur: an occasional journey on foot, or on a mule, to the convents of the capital, is an event of great interest to them, and they never fail to find the most cordial hospitality in the cottages by the way. They visit each other also on occasions, and the expense of entertaining the strangers falls on the villagers, who consider

it as a sacred right, attached as they are, even amidst their wretchedness, to their priesthood. The Christians at Tiberias are visited every year on St. Peter's day by many of the brethren from the country, as well as from the Catholic convent at Jerusalem, who perform high mass in the small church on this memorable occasion, and remain several days in the town, well entertained. The church is not a very imposing building, compared to the mosque, which is really a handsome one, and surprises the traveller who sees it in so miserable a town. It cannot boast, however, of so illustrious a site as the former, which is built on the identical spot where St. Peter threw his net, and found the miraculous draught of fishes. It is strange they do not also point out the spot on the bosom of the lake where he was about to perish in the waves.

At this place we arrived at last, after travelling four hours from the village where we had rested. Among the strangers who come from various parts to reside at this spot, was an ill-fated Englishman, who found his way here abode a

about two years since. Neither superstition nor enthusiasm had any part in this journey. He was a merchant, who, having been unfortunate in his affairs at Malta, resolved, in the true spirit of enterprise, to come to the East. He obtained an appointment under the Pacha of Acre for the making of indigo, and the situation of the undertaking was fixed at this town. He came here with sanguine anticipations of making a fortune, or at least of supporting himself handsomely. A dwelling was given him that had been previously inhabited by a Turk, near the edge of the lake, and it was more than sufficiently spacious for either his wants or luxury; for he was alone, having left his wife and children at Malta. The sultry season soon after commenced, and in his letters to a friend he complains feelingly of his situation. The indigo concern went on slowly, and poor Mr. Betts, for that was his name, was only allowed six piastres a day for all his expenses by the Pacha. This sum, though it may appear small, being about four shillings English, was amply

sufficient in a country so cheap, and where fruits, provisions, and wine bore a very low price; yet his golden dreams were too slowly accomplished, and soon began to be forgotten in the hard realities that pressed around him. The Pacha, a capricious despot, was disappointed at the tardy progress of the scheme, and wrote angry and sometimes threatening letters. It was in vain to represent to him the real state of things, the difficulty, at that season, of always procuring a sufficient quantity of the material, and the stupidity, as well as obstinacy of the people employed. Betts, a shrewd and enterprising, though an uneducated man, felt the difficulties of his situation, and looked forward to their increase and aggravation instead of abatement by the progress of time. Alone in his Eastern dwelling, unable to speak the language but through an interpreter, and cut off from society, he yet appears to have found some solace in the beautiful and hallowed scenery around him. It was the first time in his life, probably, that his mind had ever been susceptible of these feelings,

and it was solitude and circumstances alone that drew them forth.

In some of the passages of his letters, he says, "I am quite alone, and have few luxuries except a quantity of fruit, melons in particular, which the excessive heat in this flat and close situation obliges me to eat every hour: the heat is dreadful, and my prospects are gloomy enough; yet there are charms about the place which, under happier circumstances, I should enjoy greatly." Many of the people, unfortunately, looked upon him with a suspicious eye; they disliked the innovation of this new concern, and still more that a foreigner should have the management of it; so that, perhaps, any situation at that time would have appeared preferable to the one he held at Tiberias. How much our feelings are always governed by circumstances! To the traveller who came here, every hill and valley of the scene was delightful; his step lingered as long as possible, and felt at the last the strongest regret at leaving it. The unfortunate merchant would have been glad to take

wing, and have fled from its neighbourhood for ever; for he now began to regard every thing with a jaundiced eye. Indeed he had cause, for his employer the Pacha was a man that made small delay between the word and the deed, and was known to have a strong *penchant* for taking off heads when things went cross with him, or of punishing rather summarily in other ways, even if he did not carry his displeasure so far. Like poor Belzoni, when his plan of irrigating Mahmoud Ali's gardens at Cairo miscarried, and one of the chief servants of the latter had his thigh broken by the breaking of the machine, Mahmoud instantly resolved to have his head, and it would not have been an hour longer on the Italian's shoulders, had not his friend and patron, the English consul, earnestly interceded. The merchant at Tiberias made occasional excursions to different parts of the lake: had he been better versed in its history and antiquities, he might have turned his protracted stay to better account and interest, for not a single spot in the land, save the capital, offers so many resources to an inquiring

mind. Amongst the Jews who reside here, are men deeply versed in their own traditions, and who have travelled, the Poles in particular, over most parts of Europe, and others who have traversed great part of Asia, in pursuit of their calling, before they quitted it to come and reside here.

After the hot season had passed, Mr. Betts found his condition more comfortable; for the low situation of the town, at the foot of hills, and on the water's edge, exposes it to the fiercest heats. The infection to which, at this season, it is subject, is very little inferior in torment to that of the Egyptian plague. Myriads of enormous insects, which appear, beyond all doubt, to be the lineal descendants of those which, we are told, filled the air, covered the repast, and made sleep an utter stranger in the land, swarm also here, and sleep is driven from the banks of the lake. Far on the opposite side of the mountains, is pointed out the site of the ancient town of Bethsaida: some low fragments of walls have been thought to be all that remains of the city "that was once lifted up to heaven, but

now utterly cast down." The Jews, however, seem to dwell happily here. I have never seen more calm or contented countenances than these people wore, settled at last on the shores of their beloved lake. It is not necessary to believe this people attached to the picturesque, but there certainly was a strong feeling of patriotism and nationality in this: to leave for ever the scenes where they had gained their pelf, where they had wandered for years, bartering and trafficking with all nations, a life of constant excitement. They had dwelt in cities, in deserts, in hamlets, and had pursued, with an undeviating hope, the great end of a Jew's existence—money: they had now abandoned all, and turned their backs on bargains and wanderings; and the silks and satins, shawls and costly things of the East, that had been to them very dear as sources of profit, moved them no more. They passed into a state of utter quiescence, a life of contemplation, and of looking forward to the end of their career, when on their loved soil their foot alone should be triumphant. Was it zeal only, or a feeling of satiety with the world,

that urged this retreat? both perhaps were blended together: for an Oriental, however restless and active his disposition, seldom chooses, like the European trader, to die in harness: but loves to steal forth, ere his career is closed, and devote some part of it to contemplation and peace.

It would have been fortunate if the two sons of our entertainer had followed his example, and had come also to be happy and die at the lake of Galilee. It proves the uncertainty of our hopes and purposes: when the rich old merchant told his children his fixed intention to go on this distant journey, they remonstrated with him. “Why would he go thus into exile at his advanced age, and leave his family and friends, and luxurious dwelling, for a distant scene and unwholesome climate, though it was in their own ancient land?” He was deaf to all their entreaties, and taking his young wife with him, and his servants, he bade farewell to the place where he had always resided, and grown very rich, and seen his sons also become rich and prosperous merchants, and held in esteem

by all who knew them. The journey was long and tedious, for his advanced age only enabled him to proceed by short stages; but the prospect of resting beside this sea, was, to the aged Israelite, like that of a long-lost home to the exiled man; and he looked on it at last, and was comforted for the loss of all he had left behind. He had not left his dwelling many months, ere the dreadful earthquake, that laid the greater part of Aleppo in ruins, took place, and his two sons and all their families perished. Their splendid houses and gardens, for they lived luxuriously, sank in the common destruction. Their loss was very unfortunate for travellers, as they were liberal-minded men, lived in excellent style, and were very glad to see English, French, or any Europeans at their table, and visited with the Consuls. The aged father sorrowed deeply over this loss, yet could not help being struck with the mysteriousness of Providence; his coming to the land of promise had saved him, like Lot of old, when he fled from the cities of the plain to avoid a similar destruction. Had he lingered still in his

dwelling at Aleppo, and listened to the entreaties of his children, he had perished with them, as they had all resided near each other. He had wished that they should come also and dwell beside him in this revered place; but it seems they were too fond of this world and its pleasures, and the growing wealth it afforded, to come and lead a life of contemplation and peace. What might suit extremely well with their venerable parent, whose long white beard, tall stature, and wasted form, made him a very impressive personage, would hardly be so welcome to young and luxurious men. They considered, no doubt, that their well-filled warehouses, long trains of loaded camels, and cool gardens and dwellings, were far preferable to the sultry and treeless region of the lake.

But to return from this digression to the ill-fated Englishman. Soon afterwards he undertook a journey to Jerusalem, which he had long had an anxious desire to see; and though the distance, in England, would be run over by a mail-coach in eight hours, it might well be termed a journey, in this still primitive

land, of three good days' duration. It was during the feast of Easter, and the sight of the pilgrims who came to the town, made him at this time, perhaps, resolve on setting out. His mind was singularly struck, and affected by the sight of the sacred places and the ceremonies that took place there ; and he said, that he returned another man to his abode on the lake ; that he had thought little of religion till he saw the Sepulchre, and the feelings that arose there nothing could ever erase. The hard and adverse circumstances of his condition predisposed him, probably, to these emotions and sentiments, which, however, were a real consolation to him. His loneliness was now cheered by the arrival of his family from Malta, and the society of his wife was a delightful break on his weary hours ; the despondency of his views began to give way to brighter gleams of hope. They could not, of course, indulge in many luxuries ; the six piastres a day was the whole they received for their united support. The indigo concern still languished, and success, such as had been anticipated, seemed as remote as ever.

Thus situated, however, this unfortunate family, now united, might have lived in comparative comfort, had not an event taken place as cruel as it was unexpected. The merchant, either through over-exertion about his business, or the heat of the season, caught a fever. There was no medical aid in the place that could be depended on, or was likely to be of service to him. He believed it would terminate fatally, and his feelings must have been as acutely painful as it was possible for any man's to be, at the prospect of leaving his wife and children unprovided for, and without a friend, in so remote and hostile a place. He died at the end of a few days, and was buried in the Christian burial-ground, attended only by his disconsolate widow, and a few of the kinder Catholics. Some said that he had been poisoned by the natives out of envy or hatred, but this was scarcely to be believed. It was a mournful end of a very unfortunate enterprise. The widow and her children, leaving the desolate dwelling, found their way to Acre, where they continued for some time in great distress. The Consul of

Barout proved at last their only friend, relieving them by his own generosity ; and even prevailed on the young Pacha, in consideration of the services of the husband, to allow some relief to his survivors. After remaining above a year in that town, they succeeded in procuring a passage from a country, that, in its own figurative expression, had only “ heaped sorrow, like ashes, on their heads.”

No part of the environs of this celebrated sea delighted us more than the plain of Gennesaret, over which we passed a few days after. It is one of the loveliest tracts in the whole land, covered with a wild rank verdure, and watered by a single stream, that issues from a large pool in the middle of the plain. Boldly and beautifully the mountains inclosed it on two of its sides : the sun was resting redly on their verdant declivities, and on the wide and silent area beneath, on which no trace of cultivation was visible. This region was evidently the favourite residence, or place of visitation, of the Redeemer ; and here, it is said, his steps came more frequently than to any other part of the land. Where the stream finishes its course, is still

pointed out the site of one of those cities on which the curse fell.

On the following morning, ere the sun had risen, we pursued our way through a territory unrelieved by a single shrub, or blade of verdure; where for many leagues no trace of a habitation was visible. Its savageness struck us the more forcibly, after the beautiful plain we had so lately left. But the path grew more exciting as we drew nearer the mountains of Gilboa: there was a solitary grandeur and stern sublimity in the scene, on which the traveller could not help pausing to gaze, even had it waked no vivid associations of the times of old. Utter solitude was on every side: the mountains were broken in some parts into naked precipices and pointed summits; they were not dwelling-places for man, save for the wandering shepherd, whose search for pasturage must often have been vain. Amidst these solitudes was fought the battle in which Saul and his sons were slain; and the curse of David on the fatal scene seems to have been fulfilled, that there "might be no rain or dew on the mountains of Gilboa, where the shield of the mighty was cast away."

CHAPTER II.

A SYRIAN TOWN.—A RUINED VILLAGE.—
SOURCE OF THE RIVER JORDAN.—BRIDGE
OF JACOB.

A FEW days after this, when passing through the wilds of Syria, we found no longer the interesting recollections that had thus far cheered the rudest paths. Where roads, as well as inns, are sought for in vain, the shelter of a friendly roof, and the kind words of its owners, at the close of a weary day, are most grateful to the feelings. It was our good fortune to meet with this in Syria more frequently than in any other part. We were still two or three days' journey from the capital, and had travelled from break of day: the caravan had passed on, and we saw the large town at which we were to rest at a short distance before us. The sun

had already set, or rather twilight was coming on, for the whole day had been chill and gloomy, and the sky was covered with clouds. Small gardens and cultivated spots, by the road side, assured us that the place could not be poor; and the cheerlessness of the scene was somewhat enlivened by a rapid stream from the mountains, on whose brink the path had wound for many miles.

We entered the populous town, and instead of making our way, as usual, to the Caravan-serai, we resolved to trust to the hospitality of the natives. The dark and ancient towers of the Prince's dwelling rose on our left, built on a steep declivity, in the middle of the town, and surrounded by a high wall. We were advised to present ourselves to this native potentate, by whom we should be received with great civility and honour. But we mistrusted this reception, and were well aware that a handsome present would be necessary to insure his kind offices: in return we should be favoured probably with a banquet, and a lodging within the edifice. But this had too gloomy and forbidding an

aspect, with its thick and massive walls and narrow windows, looking down on the naked descent. Its tenant, too, had been an adherent in past days of the famous D'jazzar, Pacha of Acre, during the time he held the whole of this part of Syria: he was now, it was said, a very old man, the most aged chief probably in the country. His place was a strong one, and might well defy the efforts of Eastern warfare. The red face of the cliff fell steeply beneath the walls into the valley beneath, and at its foot rolled a rapid stream. After winding through several narrow, dirty, and precipitous streets, we at last had the pleasure of alighting at the door of a dwelling, to which a flight of steps conducted us. Here our guide had engaged a lodging; on entering, however, the interior looked comfortless and cold—this was imputed to the tenants having been taken by surprise—so we resolved to pass an hour in rambling through this singular town. It had now grown nearly dark, and few passengers were seen in the desolate-looking streets. Nothing looks so miserable as an Oriental town after day-light,

the fronts of the houses being generally blank and windowless, and the dwellers invisible. Only dim lights were twinkling in the few coffee-houses, and low sounds of human voices heard, varied at times by the louder and more nasal song of some dervise or wandering minstrel. We gladly made our way again to the dwelling. It was inhabited by Christians of the Romish faith, who maintained, however, the manners and costume of the people among whom they dwelt. There was a striking change for the better as to comfort: the large apartment was illumined, even to its farthest corners, by a huge fire, which blazed within a sort of recess. This was formed by a tall circular wooden screen, such as in the West of England would be called a settle. The whole aspect presented the nearest approach to comfort we ever found in these regions; for around the fire, at the foot of the settle, were laid soft cushions for the strangers.

The household was a large one: several young and good-looking women formed part of it, who received us kindly, and set about in

earnest to prepare the supper. The only objection to the luxury of this warm divan was, that all the mysteries of the cooking were obliged to be performed within the settle, at the cheerful fire, over which, in intense earnestness, bent the forms of our Syrian hostesses, their dark eyes fixed, not on conquest or mischief, but on an excellent omelet, and one or two other preparations. The tresses of their dark hair dropped at times so near the blaze, as to threaten the destruction of that richest ornament of woman. Yet why should the traveller complain of these simple cares? They were no more than their fair ancestors performed, as an inseparable part of their education and habits, to dress the fattened calf, to place the cake on the hearth, and prepare the pot of delicious honey and butter, when any travellers, "few and far between," chanced to visit their home in the wilderness or the city. The latter taste seems still to survive; for one of the ladies of the dwelling brought a plate of fresh and exquisite honey, and a small plate of fresh butter, as part of our meal, and instructed us how

they were to be eaten together. It needed not the strong fatigue of that day's journey, the drizzling rain, and the desolate town without, to enter with strong relish into the scene and its tempting accompaniments. The repast was at last ready: we would fain have shared it with the fair preparers, who had so well received the houseless stranger; but they declined, and stood calmly and silently gazing at the good will with which their viands were devoured.

Their figures were slight and very well made, the complexion pale, but the features lively and expressive, with those inseparable features, the raven hair and the dark eye. The women of these countries seem to have degenerated much less than the men; for among them are very many proofs, still extant, that the attractions of the Hebrews of old were not, probably, overrated. The full, large, Oriental eye, full of power, seems to be their heritage; and the Jewesses, in particular, are sometimes remarkable for a very fair complexion, in which the rose is richly mingled. The only objection to the sister of the beautiful Rachel, a learned com-

mentator has judged to mean no more than the soft blue glance, so much esteemed in colder climes.

The repast being finished, we resigned ourselves to the indulgence of the pipe, in which we were soon joined by another guest, a friend of the family, whose visit was intended to do us honour, and he sat down on the divan. He was a young mountaineer, clad in a sort of gala dress; his tunic was richly and beautifully embroidered, the plain ground of crimson cloth being covered with patches of silk-embroidery, of every colour, and his turban of the same fantastic material. He conversed freely of the country, its manners and habits, and condition under the present government; for he was not an inhabitant of the place, but had his dwelling among the neighbouring hills, which were very lofty. He had come from his mountains to spend a few days in the town with his friends, probably because it was about the time of the celebration of Easter: he spoke with attachment of his wild home, compared with the dull and confined streets of the town, over which the eye of the old Sheich was per-

petually wandering. The love of mountain life and scenery seems inherent and warm in every one who has been accustomed to it: the Druse on the snowy and rugged summits of Lebanon looks with aversion on the rich plains of Syria at his feet; and the Syrian native of the base eminences around, as well as the Highlander, would not exchange his bold site for the busy town, or the quiet valley.

The hour of repose at last came, and the divan being intended to serve as a couch, we lay down around the dying embers of the fire, while the family retired to the chambers that opened within. In a few moments all was hushed in the dwelling; the only sound was the loud beating of the rain on the roof and the casements of our apartment. About two in the morning, we were awoke by the sound of light footsteps and hushed voices in the apartment; and looking round, saw the forms of our fair hostesses arrayed, not for the banquet or the dance, but to sally forth, as it seemed, into the pitiless rain and the darkness of the night. On inquiring of Michelle the cause of this sin-

gular vision, he answered, that it was the day of a great ceremonial in their church, some peculiar saint's day, and that they were hastening, at this chill hour, to attend it. With a small lamp in their hand, the cloak thrown over their shoulders, their rich tresses secured under a kind of turban, and a request that their movements might not disturb our slumbers, they descended the narrow steps into the street, and sallied forth on their devout enterprise. It was singular enough to see such strict observance of Catholicism on the summit of a Syrian mountain, in the heart of the prophet's dominion ; it would have better suited the territory of the Pontiff. Just as day began to dawn, the devotees returned, and soon after began to busy themselves in the care of the house. We soon quitted our divan, and waited anxiously for the appearance of the sun, but he was shrouded by dense and dark clouds. Once more the fire blazed cheerily within that comfortable inclosure, the memory of which often followed us in our after-wanderings—the khan, the tent, the cold plain for a bed : they were not like this

Syrian home. And well did the gentle hands of the devotees furnish forth the breakfast; eggs and coffee of the best, honey, fresh cakes baked on the hearth, poultry, and cream: it was a table spread in the wilderness, and when we went forth afterwards into the pelting rain and wind, over chalky cliffs and long dreary ways, we felt like the wanderer of the Apocrypha who went down to the house of Raguël, the dwelling of beauty, but whom an evil spirit strove to scare away.

Hour fled after hour, and as often as we looked forth into the weather, the sky was covered with clouds and the rain fell in torrents. We heard its ceaseless and dull fall with little emotion; for though it was absolutely necessary we should push on in the course of the day, we saw no reason for peevish and fretful impatience—a feeling that was no stranger to our minds in some situations. Often was our fire replenished, as well as our chibouque, and our servants grew sadly impatient, but it was useless. The occasional footfall of passengers, and the confusion of tongues, were heard on the pave-

ment without, down whose declivity, the rain ran in many a rill. The Oriental has good cause to dread rain, for a more pitiable and helpless object than the being on whom the soaked turban, large heavy robe, big volume of trowsers, all pour and drip their well-stored moisture, can hardly be conceived, while he drags the heavy weight along. At last the midday voice of the Muezzin came, which the faithful, at least all who could, obeyed on their carpets and divans, their zeal not carrying them to kneel down on the streaming pavement: to the sand or the rock there is no objection, but the weltering pool is another thing.

Our kind friends began to anticipate the preparation of another dinner, when the weather appeared to clear for a short time, and we resolved to set out. After taking a grateful leave of the Syrians, we descended the steep declivities into the valley; thence we wound up other chalky and barren hills; but it was a dreary progress, for the weather had abated little of its cheerlessness; the few olive-trees that were scattered over the soil seemed but a mockery of

foliage, and the remembrance of the comforts we had left behind, only added to our vexation. In the way, we halted at a wretched village, whose mud-walled habitations had nothing inviting, and the peasants, who stood at their doors, and looked idly at the passengers, were as squalid and dirty as their abodes. They brought us some curdled milk and bread ; and instead of entering beneath their roofs, we took shelter within the walls of a ruined temple, that stood at a short distance. It was a small but massive ruin, with a portico of two or three very thick pillars ; the roof and great part of one of the walls had fallen down, and the interior was divided into several chambers. This ruin stood quite aloof and utterly neglected ; there were many niches in the walls within, where statues, no doubt, formerly stood. It served us as a refuge and a refectory ; the most useful purpose, perhaps, it had served for many ages ; and the half-clad peasants, among whom were several women, were very grateful for the gratuity given for their hospitality. This spot commanded a very extensive view of the surround-

ing country; which, however, appeared very barren, both of wood and water, and but thinly inhabited.

It was with no small pleasure we drew nigh at last to the village of El Furkah. The path up the hill on which it stood was through a ravine of yellow cliffs; but instead of finding a comfortable resting-place, we saw only a heap of blackened ruins. The greater part of the dwellings had been destroyed a few days before, by the troops of the hostile Pacha. It seemed to have been a wanton ravage, for these defenceless people had offered no resistance to the passage of the victorious troops. On the summit of the mountain, this scene of destruction was sad and striking, for the hand of War had, perhaps, till now rarely drawn nigh the lofty and rugged dwelling of these unfortunate Syrians. Part of the population had been Greeks, and the rest were Turks; but faith made no distinction in this ravage, for they had fared alike miserably. Some had perished amidst the ruins of their burning cottages: we looked into one or two of them; the cold hearth, broken furni-

ture, and blackened walls, among which a few despairing beings were visible, proved that the enemy had been merciless. We had anticipated a lodging, a good meal, and the welcome look with which these people had often received us; but the survivors were themselves half famished, and their warm roofs of a few days before, were open to the sky, or else spoiled of every thing.

The Turk bore with more calmness the total wreck of all he possessed, and was seen to sit silently beside the roofless walls and scattered fragments: no anger or vindictiveness in his look, but rather submission to fate, or the will of Alla, which is the same thing. Some of the dwellings had been very good, and from the appearance of their remains, must have possessed inmates of some affluence, beneath whose roof probably the harem found a place, and luxuries were not unknown. But all had fled alike from their mountain residence, and left the places where they and their forefathers had long dwelt, as a wasted inheritance to the stranger and the pilgrim. As we gazed on it,

we could not help execrating the useless cruelty of such a deed. There were no groves near the spot ; not a solitary clump, or the shadow of a single tree ; the cliffs rose wild and naked on every side : it was a place where the Goule and the Afrit might have made their home, or the widowed mother or dishonoured husband have come and poured their curses to the solitudes around. A Greek priest had lived here, as pastor to this poor mountain flock, among whom he had lived, as is their wont, in point of comfort and expenditure, on a footing of perfect equality : his church, which had been no mean building, had suffered the same fate as the other edifices, and he had gone with the remains of his people into the plain beneath, where he was now, most probably, following the plough, or engaged in some equally useful calling. The roofless house of prayer, the broken altar, and torn and scattered fragments of Greek paintings of saints, sad daubs at the best, testified that the hand of ravage had been unsparing. The house of the Sheikh seemed to have been the most spacious edifice in the place, saving the rude khan, with its

roof supported on a single pillar, the place of resort for all the smokers and loungers of the village in the evening, and to which we had, in several villages, been indebted for an asylum. The poor priest, perhaps, felt his fate as keenly as any of the exiles, and resembled one of his brethren with whom I became acquainted a few days subsequent. This man was an ascetic in the loneliness, at least, of his dwelling, that stood on the brink of a cliff, close to the sea, and remote from every other habitation. There was much scenic beauty on every side of his residence; the summits of Lebanon, covered with snow, rose at a few miles' distance; and scattered amidst its declivities, were visible the convents of the Maronite, the Armenian, and the Greek, amidst whose well supplied walls this recluse might probably have found an asylum. But solitude and independence seemed to have peculiar attractions for him, although neither his cellar nor larder would tempt the pilgrim from his way. The walk along the shore was one of the most romantic imaginable, but he had no conception of any charms of

Nature; and when, fatigued, or desiring a shelter from the sun, I sometimes entered his dwelling, he was mostly seated on the floor, that was covered with coarse matting, occupied in reading, for he had several books, or else in lonely and indolent musing. He had a good length of beard, and a very fine and impressive countenance; his cottage was divided into two apartments, by a curtain that hung down in the middle. Sometimes, in lovely weather, he was found reclined luxuriously on the brink of the cliff without, in an absorbed attitude, as if he had been the veriest devotee of the picturesque; but the lulling sound of the waves below seemed to have the same effect on his senses as the murmur of the fountain has on the musing Mussulman. He frequently asked me to drink coffee with him; but this repast, the most substantial he often tasted, was one of necessity, for he had nothing better to give; and was not preferred from the same motive as that shown by the "Opium Eater," whose invitation to dine on coffee near his own beautiful lake, in the North, offered a rich in-

tellectual treat: for a heavier repast might have marred his exquisite fancy.

The Monk regretted, with a sigh, that he had no good wine to offer to my lips, or his own, and no hospitable repast to spread on his board: he was supported entirely by the contributions of the peasants in the neighbourhood, who brought some fruits, and bread, but no viands more luxurious. Yet there will his life be dreamed away: and very nearly approaching to this man's existence and habit of mind, have been, no doubt, that of many a recluse of ancient and more saintly times, in the far wildernesses.

To return to the village of El Furkah: deserted and in ruins as it now stands, the vicinity was full of interest. At a few miles distance, in the midst of the plain beneath, stood the village of Banias, which is allowed to have been the ancient Dan of the Jews. The territory of Judea must have extended very remotely in this direction, for the expression, "from Dan to Beersheba," was used to express the extreme limits of the land. And much of this

territory, which at present appertains to Syria, possesses an aspect more bold and wild than many parts of the ancient land of promise, but not so rich, romantic, and beautiful; indeed this part of Syria, with the exception of the plain of Damascus, is more barren and savage than Palestine, with few of its minute and touching beauties. The plain in which stood the ancient Dan of the Hebrews, was, however, a relief to the eye, after the naked solitudes of the mountain paths.

At the distance of a few miles from the village, the Jordan takes its source; amidst bare and rugged cliffs, like the fountain of Siloam, it gushes out of a rock, and during several hours of its course continues to be a small and insignificant rivulet. The solitude and wildness of the place of its rise, near which there is no dwelling, and where the foot of the passenger seldom comes, are strikingly contrasted with the glory and fertility of its subsequent course. That narrow rill, over which a child might have stepped, was the chosen scene

of many miracles: the warriors of Israel issuing from their dreary desert homes, the successor of Elias, and, lastly, the Being of whom all these were the faint types and shadows, were indebted to its hallowed wave for a glorious proof of the divine power and love. Within a few hours' course from hence the stream falls into a lake, in the midst of a plain: it did not seem to mingle with its waters, but, as in the sea of Galilee, to preserve its current distinct. This lake was in the midst of a wide and solitary plain; and along the brink, and in the shallow parts, was covered with weeds and rushes. It was not of great extent, perhaps about three miles in circumference. The Bedouins, or wandering Turkomans, sometimes pitch their tents beside its banks for the convenience of water. This lake is the ancient waters of Merom, by the concurrent testimony of Josephus and other historians; and though its waters are no longer bitter, it derives no small interest from the illustrations and allusions so often made to it by the prophets.

However unpalatable and repulsive this lake was to the Israelites of old, its character is now totally changed; and had the weather been sultry and clear, instead of chill and gloomy, we should have rested awhile beside its cool and moveless water.

A few miles from its banks is a spot equally interesting, which we only saw at a distance—an ancient bridge, revered by every pilgrim, and held in high regard even by the Jew. There is scarcely an Arab or Turk in the country, who does not name the bridge of Jacob with respect. It is of great antiquity; and here, tradition has said, the exiled patriarch passed the stream of Jordan, on his return from Padan Aram, the only boundary that separated him from his native land: rendered memorable also by the messengers of heaven who came here to hail his return and announce his future glory. The identity of the spot might well be preserved for many ages. At any rate it was a beautiful remembrance; and over the steep and rocky banks of the Jordan, which

here rushes rapidly along its bed, it threw a wilder romance and charm than if a ruined tower had stood there, or the deep and fragrant groves, such as wave round the streams of Damascus, had here thrown their shadow on the sultry soil.

CHAPTER III.

MOUNT CARMEL.—SCENE OF THE PROPHET'S
SACRIFICE.—RUINS OF CESAREA.—RESI-
DENCE OF THE PROPHET ELIAS.

NO part of the promised land creates a deeper interest in the traveller than the rich and extensive bosom of Mount Carmel: while barrenness spreads on every side, and the curse of the withered soil is felt on hill, valley, and shore, this beautiful mountain seems to retain its ancient “excellency” of flowers, trees, and a perpetual verdure. The scenes in its interior are often bold and romantic in the highest degree: deep and verdant precipices descending into lonely glens, through which a rivulet is seen dashing wildly; the shepherd and his flock on the long grassy slopes, that

afford at present as rich pasture-ground as in the days when Nabal fed his numerous herds in Carmel. There is, indeed, a character peculiarly pastoral about the scenery; few grey and naked rocks, or sublime but useless cliffs, are here, as in the mountain of the Temptation, or on Pisgah. And this fertility and vivid verdure, on so sultry a soil, is deeply welcome and refreshing: more especially so, the woods that wave over the summit and sides. It is beautiful to stand beneath their shelter on the brink of the mount, and look far on every side, where nought but a forsaken and shadowless land meets the eye. On the banks of the “ancient river,” on which “the strength of the mighty” was broken, and the power of Sisera swept away, no solitary tree spreads its shade: the stream rolls between its green and naked shores; these are so low, that the river overflows to some extent on each side during the rainy season, and is so deep and rapid as not to be fordable. It was most probably during this season, that the army of Sisera, in its flight, was in part destroyed by

the waters, for in its usual narrow course, the stream is not of sufficient width and power to be dangerous. Wishing to cross it one evening, after sunset, and mistrusting the depth, we called to two young Arabs, who were seated on a green knoll on the opposite side, and asked if we could pass with safety. They replied doubtfully; and on the promise of a reward, one of them stripped to the skin, and with a long pole in his hand, entered the river till it reached his chin and he felt his footing grow unsteady, when he was obliged to retreat. We turned disappointed from the spot, and the Arab youth, chilled and dripping, gained the bank again without his reward, which it was impossible to pay. Just above, on the side of Carmel, is the spot pointed out by tradition as having been the scene of Elijah's slaying the prophets of Baal. There is much of the picturesque about the place: the soil is strewn with several masses of grey stone, around which are many fine trees. It is a pleasing and lonely spot, such as the imagination would hardly have selected for so ruthless yet necessary a

deed. But if tradition should err here, there can be no illusion with respect to the scene of the memorable descent of the fire from heaven. When "all Israel was gathered together unto Carmel," it was clearly on this side the mountain, where it descends gradually into the noble plain beneath. The spot was finely chosen by the prophet for the spectacle of his sacrifice; since the multitude of people, coming from the regions of Samaria, might stand with perfect convenience in the splendid and open area of Esdraelon, which is here terminated at the foot of Carmel. The declivity of the mountain, its brink dark with woods, and its sides covered with the richest pasture, looks over a vast extent of country on every side: from the hills of Samaria, Cana, and Gilboa, the miracle might have been beheld; and to the eager gaze of the Israelites in the plain, the prophets of the groves, their useless altars, and the avenging messenger of God, were as distinct as if the scene had been acted at their feet. This, too, is the only face of the hill beneath which the Kishon flows. What a noble subject would

this be for a painter: the sun going down on the mountain declivities, while the eye of despair as well as faith was fixed in matldening suspense or triumph on the fading sky; and the hushed myriads gazed on each dazzling beam and caught every passing sound, as if the coming of the God was there: the infidel king also, with his chariots and armed men, waiting, moveless, from morn till eve.

It was an impressive spot, from which we turned with regret, as the fading light warned us to depart, for the neighbourhood was not altogether safe. It is one of the unhappy features of this land, that the richest feasts of the memory and fancy are often followed by the pressure of real evils. It was in vain to think of regaining our quarters on the sea-shore that night; we were at too great a distance: and we thought with regret of our comfortable quarters in the home of the Syrian, when we entered and looked around on the squalid hut and its lawless inmates, where we were doomed to repose till morn. The cavern of the Kamschatdale had been quite as cleanly and far

more roomy, with the advantage also of a blazing fire, which we could not enjoy here. The night wind that entered through the open door was chill, and the rain now fell heavily without. We had wound our way with some difficulty in the dark, beside deep pools of water and pits on each side, ere we entered the hut, the only habitation the uncivil Arabs would give us. It consisted but of one long low apartment, excessively narrow; one half of its scanty width was occupied by a divan, formed of a raised earthen seat of four or five feet high, without any covering. On this indulgent place we ascended, in order to have a part of the chamber exclusively to ourselves, and to escape from the rude and annoying crowd of natives, who now thronged into the hut, and squatted themselves forthwith on the floor, pipe in hand. The clouds of smoke that slowly rose from their dark lips soon completely filled the apartment, and formed a dense shroud, through which the line of Arabs who sat beneath, closely wedged against the wall, could be but dimly seen. In fact, we

were almost blinded, and there was no remedy for the evil. Michelle made several attempts to light a fire on the wretched earthen floor, in order to boil a little tea for our supper, and at last succeeded; for we had been dinnerless during the day's progress. But unfortunately we found, to our dismay, that our stock of tea, that had been a real treasure during the journey, was entirely destroyed in the attempt to cross the river Kishon. It was our only hope; and Bruce's Arabs, in the desert of Sennaar, never grasped their leathern bottles with more despairing eagerness to drain the last drop of water, than we strove to find amidst the wet, tasteless, and sodden leaves, a sufficient portion to furnish forth our evening's refreshment. But it was in vain; and a piece of dry bread was our only solace. The senses, in truth, were wholly in fault here: the 'din of barbarous Arabic was enough to deafen us; and had the night blasts entered the open door with sweeping fury, it would have been a mercy, in freeing us for a moment from the poisonous clouds of smoke. The fellows were insolent and rude,

and by their behaviour and discourse, had probably never seen a Christian lodged within their hamlet before. We had not expected, in the region of Carmel, to find a spot so unwelcome and insecure; for my knife and fork, the companions of many a wild journey, soon became a prey to their cupidity; and it was uncertain whether our remaining effects would not quickly follow. In fact, we were completely in their power; and they might have turned us out at night, had they so chosen, amidst the darkness, as desolate as was ever a martyr of old, pursued into these solitudes by the hand of persecution.

The Sheich, who might have kept his people in better order, was seated in the midst, with his long dirty pipe and dingy white cloak and turban, as noisy and troublesome as the rest: his reign must have been but a sorry and confined one, for the hamlet consisted but of eight or ten huts, wretchedly built, and situated on a barren and shelterless part of the hill. On a sudden the sweet sound of a pipe was heard without, and the Arabs requested to send for the musician, who quickly after entered very

willingly, and, for the prospect of a reward, began to exercise his powers, much to his hearers' satisfaction. He was a youth of the hamlet, the only one, probably, who had any peculiar skill in the way of music. Its effect, in this case, was certainly very pleasing, for it reduced our wild audience to instant and entire silence. Puffing the coarse tobacco from their mouths, and fixing their dark eyes on the musician, who was mounted beside us on the rude divan, they sat moveless against the wall, and the fearful discordance of tongues was over. The former played several wild and sweet airs on his pipe; for this simple instrument is an inmate of every Arab village or cottage in the land. As the daily employment of a great part of these peasants is in tending their flocks of sheep, or tilling their scanty fields, the pipe is carried with them to beguile their labour, as well as to cheer them in the evening hours after their return.

It had now become late; we paid the musician and let him depart, in the hope that the audience would depart also; but this was not

yet to be: they lingered and smoked, as if their pipes were as interminable as the Turk's magic mahmoudi, which, as soon as spent, instantly left another in his eager hand. We lay down, however, at last, on our earthen bed, unable to keep our eyes unclosed any longer, and soon fell asleep. The first break of morning was most welcome, and we quickly prepared to depart, after accepting a little milk for breakfast, and paying the Sheikh a good price for his miserable lodging. The rain still fell, and the mountain paths were almost impassable: leading our horses, we walked for some way along the declivities, and turned our backs with joy on our wretched resting-place. It was a sad and revolting picture of human nature: even in this remote and secluded hamlet, in a land where every man's hand was often against his fellow, sensual vice entered in its most repulsive form. The idea that solitude and distance from the contagion of mixed society and crowded towns, is favourable to purity of feeling and conduct, is contradicted by the state of things in most of the villages of the East. After a few hours the sun

the dreaded and devoted character of the exile, and the fierce and 'avenging' message that was at times laid on him. Some way farther down, there is a basin of water, filled by a stream that flows down the side of the descent; and around the brink are found various stones of a singular kind, closely resembling different species of fruit: they are crystallised, and many of them very beautiful; some of them solid, and others hollow: this effect may be caused by the peculiar property of the water. These stones are gathered, and offered for sale to the pilgrim and the traveller on many parts of the coast. It is uncertain by whom this convent was destroyed; most probably by the hand of the Arab or the Turk, that has so often, in past times, thrust the poor recluses from their asylum of ages.

The remains of monasteries scattered in different parts often excited surprise that no zealous priest or pilgrim ever had the taste or enthusiasm to fix his residence on the mount of Tabor. While standing on its summit, during a previous part of the journey, we could not help remarking, what an enviable site it

was for the residence of a recluse; and that in a cottage on such a spot, it would be easy to pass weeks and months without ennui; the objects over which it looked, were so strange and various. On an eminence at some distance were the few poor cottages of the decayed village of Nain, at whose gate “was carried out the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.” Yet even a cluster of rude cottages, inhabited by people the very reverse of all with which the imagination would have tenanted them, are invaluable, as they give an identity to the spot. From the situation of the village, on the declivity of the mountain, the scene of the miracle must have been rendered more striking, as the funeral procession passed slowly out of the gate down the steep, on the bold breast of which the remains of the place now stand. The inhabitants are between one and two hundred in number. And not very far from this village a spot was pointed out to us, that harmonized little with the softness or the associations of the scene—the village of Endor, where the sorceress dwelt who foretold the ruin of Saul and his family. A writer of romance would have fixed her resi-

dence amidst savage wilds, and all the terrors of Nature, rather than on the banks of a lovely stream, in the midst of luxuriant pastures and richly cultivated fields.

But to return from this digression :—We pursued our way from the foot of Carmel, along a path that soon led nigh to the sea. The day now began to draw to a close, and we saw on our right, at a short distance, a gloomy and massive fortress, jutting out into the sea. We stopped to gaze on this place of strength, which is now in the hands of the Arabs, but in the days of the Crusades was possessed by the Christians. We wished much to have entered and passed the night within its walls, but were uncertain what kind of reception we should find, as the 'Arab, in such a place of power, might be apt to impose exorbitant conditions. The fortress was built on a rock, and surrounded by walls of immense thickness ; and from its appearance, the interior must have been of considerable extent as well as grandeur. It was evidently built by a Christian and not a Saracen hand, for the ruins of a church are conspi-

cuous. On a cliff, almost washed on every side by the sea, and difficult of access from the land, it might bid defiance to every effort of the infidels. But this strong-hold of Pellegrino, as it was formerly called, has changed masters long ago: the Bedouin rests in the halls where the Greek Emperors lodged; the church and the altars are destroyed, or turned into a place of worship of the Prophet. It bore a striking resemblance to one of the large feudal castles in the Highlands, in the predatory times of old, sheltering a nest of spoilers within its haughty walls, from whence they might safely defy the threats of rival or princely power, and sally forth on their plundering excursions whenever it pleased them. There was formerly a deep moat around the fortress and its rock, and joining with the sea on each side, by which it must have been entirely insulated; but this ditch is now dry. My guide wished me to enter and try the hospitality of the inmates. No doubt, the lodging would have been far more sumptuous and roomy than we had been lately accustomed to: there were several lofty and spacious apart-

ments remaining, their massive walls and floors of grey stone little injured by time; and we might have reposed where paladins and lords from many a land had rested from their toils; but there was too formidable and feudal a look about the place, and the cottage of the peasant at that moment was more desired. We afterwards regretted not having entered the castle, even at the risk of being fleeced; for there would have been something welcome in the contrast, after lodging so often in the hut in the wilderness, to find one's self amidst the time-worn halls of a fierce and lawless age, when every man's sword was his law, and Heaven was deemed to smile on scenes of havock and blood for the sake of the Cross. The fancy might have wandered to many a dark deed and guilty scene; for the gloomy battlement, on which the sun was now redly lingering, seemed to give warrant to its wildest flights.

As the daylight was now fast leaving us, it was necessary to seek some resting-place for the night. Turning from the castle, we pursued our way along the shore; but no cottage or

hamlet was in sight for some distance. The hallowed mountain, and the gloomy wall of the fortress, soon faded in the advancing night. The weather was beautiful, however, and the sea, at whose brink the path sometimes passed, fell with a low murmur on the level sandy beach. After proceeding two or three leagues, we drew nigh to a village on the shore, and with great pleasure saw its lights glimmering—a sure sign that the inhabitants are yet awake. It was a mean and poor place; and making our way to the dwelling of the Sheikh, we were very willingly admitted. Over the dim earthen floor a coarse carpet was instantly spread. The Sheikh sat down with us on the floor, and handed us pipes, but the tobacco was too bad to be endured: the coffee was more acceptable: hot cakes, baked on the hearth were soon produced, with some fish and eggs. The family of the ruler of this little village were extremely civil, and his wife and daughter did not refuse to attend on the infidel guests; but their features were carefully veiled, their eyes only being visible as they moved up

and down. The host told us the path we were pursuing was dangerous, and counselled us to take two or three men as guards from his village, the pay for whose protection would have gone chiefly into his pocket. A few of the people of the place dropped in after our supper, each with his chibouque in his hand, and sat down round the flickering embers of charcoal in a social way. They could not conceive it possible for a stranger to come from such a distance to wander over their wild country in order to gratify his curiosity. "Inshallah," God is merciful, was the occasional exclamation: as if it was a very gracious circumstance that I was preserved at all in such a useless and strange enterprise. Our visitors, more polite than the Arabs who would not quit our hut a few nights before, dropped off in a short time; the family also sought their chambers, and we remained alone beside the dying embers of the fire, close to which we drew our light couches, as the air from the sea was chill. Every one in the village seemed to be sunk in repose, for the lights had disappeared from the dwellings, and no

sound was heard without save the fall of the waves. This hour of stillness was not without its pleasures: unable to sleep for some time, and thoroughly refreshed from the fatigues of the day, we sat conversing on the varied scenes of our journey: the vapour that rose from our charcoal fire, on which fresh fuel had been placed, and circled slowly and stiflingly through the apartment, did not prevent our enjoying to the full the warmth and comfort of our situation, as we had almost expected to pass the night on the naked beach.

Waking at an early hour next morning, the first sounds we heard, and which had probably broken on our slumbers, were those of the Sheikh at his morning prayers. Perfectly regardless of our presence, he was entirely absorbed in his early orisons, and with a clear and not unmusical voice, that was at times measured and subdued, and then broke out into a sudden and more eager tone, he continued for nearly half an hour engaged greatly to his satisfaction. In villages such as this, where there is neither mosque nor muezzin, and no opportunity of

daily worship, we observed generally there was greater attention paid to private and domestic devotion. At morning and evening we had always remarked, in our various lodgings, that the inmates rarely failed in their obedience to the Koran: we had seen them at the first break of day sometimes start from the earthen floor, lay their cloak at their feet, and commence their prayers. But we never chanced to observe the women thus engaged; never heard the sound of their voices; and were we to judge of their future fate by the rarity of external devotion among them, either in the mosque, or beneath the seclusion of their own roof, we should be disposed to believe with the prophet, that souls dwelt not in those fair forms, or that a separate paradise, of far less glory and pleasantness, was allotted to them. However, charity will pass a milder judgment, and suppose that religion may be thought of and desired, unseen by the outward eye. In fact, the Oriental female character differs, in this respect, utterly from the European: in our more polished countries, as well as of more pure and consoling

faith, it is always observed that the number of the softer sex attached to religion far exceeds that of the other sex, in Protestant as well as Catholic countries, and among dissenters of every denomination. But in the East the case is now, as it ever has been, reversed. The small number of the fair sex that attend the mosques, compared with the men, as well as their carelessness and ignorance of the book of their faith, is conspicuous. It should seem that Christianity alone gives woman her proper share in religious, as well as civil enjoyments. Was it not thus also in the times of old? How rarely, even in the history of the patriarchs and prophets, is there any favoured mention made of the female character! Man alone seemed then, as now, among the Orientals, to bear away the chief privileges of the present world, as well as the dim promises of the future; and the visible revelations of the Deity were made to him alone. The opinion so general among the Turks, that the future state of the other sex will be decidedly a lonely and degraded one, compared to their own, is strangely at vari-

ance with their strong domestic attachments. It is impossible to see more affectionate husbands and fathers than are often to be observed among this people; and when Azrael, the Angel of Death, lays his hand on the form and features they have loved so much, it must be bitter to believe that they are perished for ever from the view—that the veil of another world, when drawn aside, will discover only strange forms of beauty awaiting them, all unknown and unloved. We had more than once observed a remarkable difference in the expressions used by the two sexes under circumstances of severe distress—and these simple words spoke more forcibly, perhaps, in favour of the just and sincere sentiments of the weaker one, than all the prostrations in the mosque would have done—in abandonment, bereavement, and agony of mind, where hope itself had taken flight, and a trust in God was the last anchor of the breaking heart. And to Him they appealed in words of deep and fervent feeling, that did not come from their lips like new and strange sounds; but they never uttered the

Prophet's name, or made the slightest allusion to his book, or the hopes and supports it contained. • whereas, amidst the sufferings that preyed on the spirits of the men, Mohammed's name was often heard. But for this there might be a selfish feeling; perhaps his paradise was in their thoughts, and the prospect of those vivid enjoyments comforted them amidst present evils. In truth, this selfishness is at the root of the devotedness of the people to their faith.

The Osmanli was sustained by the sullen dignity as well as fatalism of his sentiments, when the ataghan of the Greek thirsted every hour for his blood; but the willingness to sacrifice himself for those who were dear to him—the recklessness when the messenger of fate drew nigh, so they were safe, were not felt by him. Such sentiments were entertained alone by the wife and the mother. “Where is my father, my mother, and my husband?” said a beautiful woman, weeping bitterly; “all love of life is buried in their grave: and for me, the sooner death comes, the more welcome it will be; for death has no terrors to me now!”

A fine instance of attachment in misery came under our view amidst one of these scenes. Four young Turkish women had taken shelter in a forsaken dwelling, whose many apartments had been left desolate by the hurried flight of the wealthy family who lived there. Desertion had been too recent to allow the removal of all the articles of ornament as well as use; but the hand of the spoiler was visible on the defaced walls and floors of the dwelling. The carpets and divans were taken away, and the air came freshly through the broken lattice-work of the windows. In one of the silent chambers these four friendless fugitives had taken refuge; and their attachment to each other seemed to increase, as destruction drew nigh their place of concealment. The fear of a painful doom was dreadful to these delicate women, whose life had hitherto been one of calm and indulgence; and often with trembling steps and anguished features, they inquired, like the victim king of Amalek, "if the bitterness of death was past."

It came at last, and the hand of the stranger

could not avert it. But as they lived, companions in fear and solitude, so they resolved to perish, and the hand of the murderer did not spare. They fell at the same moment beneath the pursuer's sword.

Different, very different from such noble sentiments were those felt by the Greeks in similar circumstances : vindictiveness, heartlessness and callousness, often marked their endurance of adversity. It was curious to see, on one occasion, a number of Greeks, who had changed their faith for the turban, seated calmly amidst their victorious countrymen, in a splendid apartment of a palace that had been plundered : there was no shame on one hand, no contempt on the other expressed for the apostates ; a share of the spoil would have richly repaid them for the loss of Christianity.

While we lived in Nicosia, amidst many scenes of spoliation, was a spacious mansion in the centre of a garden : we passed through one empty apartment after another ; and in the most remote, seated on the floor, were two of the family that, a few weeks before,

had dwelt here in peace ; and they were the only survivors. It might have been supposed that anxiety and sorrow would have disturbed every moment of their existence ; for the sabre that had slain their relatives, was suspended by a single hair over their heads ; but their spirits were gay and joyous ; they passed most of the hours in working some embroidery, and talked and laughed without a cloud on their brow.

To return from this digression to the village on the shore, on which the sun now shone brightly : the Sheich would have pressed us to stay and breakfast beneath his roof ; but as our sheltering there at all had been a case of necessity rather than choice, we resolved to pursue our way. Bidding adieu to this chief, and paying his rather more than reasonable demands, we proceeded along the beach, on which a fresh and cool breeze blew from the sea.

About midday, after travelling through a tract of little interest, we came to the ruins of Cesarea. A low wall of grey stone encompasses them ; and without this, was anciently a wide

moat, which is now dry. These remains derive their interest more from the remembrances attached to the spot, than from any grandeur or beauty that can be at present discerned. An enthusiast, no doubt, would even now believe in the identity of many a shattered edifice and broken wall, as those where the apostles and martyrs lodged, and the people were blessed with the words that fell from their lips. But time has been too busy with the scene, and his hand has been heavy on the city of Herod, who here finished his career of power and crime, in the hour when more than human glory was given to him. The dwelling of Cornelius the centurion, as well as that where Paul spoke before Agrippa, and Felix trembled, as well as the humbler roof of Philip the Evangelist, are all levelled alike with the dust.

The situation of the city is pleasant, close on the sea, with hills at a short distance: it was formerly the chief harbour in Palestine, and its climate healthy and beautiful, as is the whole of this coast to the present day. Of the temple, forum,

and amphitheatre which it formerly possessed, it is difficult now to discover the sites: an eminence adjoining, that looks boldly over the sea, and where there are still some trifling remains, is supposed to have been the site of the latter. The walls, as well as the fortress, of which some massive remains exist, were erected by the Crusaders, who displayed excellent taste in their choice of the strongest positions along the coast. Within the ruined fortress are several fragments of columns, of considerable beauty, of granite and alabaster: this was probably the residence of many a Norman or Burgundian lord, for the French chivalry had possession of the place, and fortified it.

Leaving these ruins, we pursued our way, that was now a very sultry one, for the breeze from the sea had died away. We left the place with little emotion, for we were journeying to a scene of far higher interest. The difference of feeling is, in truth, very great, when the traveller's steps wander to the places of the Apostles' devotedness, or to those of their Divine Master's; and on this occasion, as on every subsequent one,

both memory and imagination raised a barrier too mighty to be drawn aside. It is vain to say, "Here Paul triumphed, and made the prince and the warrior tremble: here Peter diffused health and blessing, and the chains of cruelty and the gates of death were alike broken asunder before them." Even to such an announcement as this we are comparatively indifferent, because the steps of a mightier are at hand, on whose image memory lingers with a charm that time cannot weaken: the words of glory and immortality come again to our ears; and the thoughts turn with joy from the valley of Elias, and the ruins of the palace of Agrippa, to the faintest footstep of Him in whose love is our only safety. Who can bend over the spot where the blood of Stephen was poured forth, when the garden of Gethsemané is full in view? or can look with any enthusiasm or excitement on the scenes, close at hand, of the Apostles' sufferings and persecution, when Olivet rises above, on whose brow were shed the tears of unutterable sorrow for a lost nation—from whose summit was turned the last look of its

Redeemer on the world he had saved? Even in the lonely Isle of Patmos, the image of the disciple who was exiled there, is wholly lost in that of the love that so distinguished him ; and the heart gives its homage but faintly and coldly, in comparison, to “men of like passions with ourselves,” however inspired and devoted.

CHAPTER IV.

BAZAAR AT RAMLA.

A FEW weeks after this visit, we again passed by the remains of Cesarea, in an open boat: it was a clear starlight night, as we sailed slowly near the shore, and their appearance was more impressive then than by the sultry blaze of midday. The grey walls and ruined aqueducts and edifices were sadly distinct; and there being little wind, the sea fell gently on the rocky beach, and the shattered fragments that had fallen within its mark. On arriving at Ramla, we were less fortunate in procuring a resting-place, than in the Sheich's dwelling on the shore. There is a great number of ruinous places and edifices within and around the town,

and some of these are picturesque :—mouldering walls and chambers, covered with a deep canopy of foliage ; large paved courts, with arches and windows, through which the evening sun fell on the time-worn interior, richly and beautifully shaded. We occupied several hours in rambling about the precincts. The place is chiefly inhabited by Turks ; and when night drew on, being greatly at a loss for a lodging, we should have availed ourselves of one of these ruinous places, but were not certain of their security, and so looked round for some hospitable roof. After making two or three applications in vain, and the streets growing quite deserted, one of the inhabitants at last offered his poor accommodations willingly, and these were in the public bazaar. It was a singular situation in which to pass the night ; but necessity allows little fastidiousness. The lights had all disappeared from the little shops and recesses, in this place of trade for the town ; and most of the sellers, as well as buyers, had departed.

Our friend was one of the merchants, a little,

plausible, but well-meaning Turk : it was not his house, but his shop, that was to be our asylum for the night ; and this offer, such was our friendlessness, was gladly accepted. We sat in conversation with our host for some time, sipping the coffee we had ordered, and feeling the agreeable conviction, that, if supperless, we should not go roofless to rest. The Turk was a notable man, neatly dressed ; his turban well put on, and his spare pair of slippers kept carefully by him during the whole of the day : he conversed with perfect freedom about his situation, business, and the commerce of the place.

This bazaar was the whole scene of his existence : not very long after sunrise, he repaired here from his dwelling, opened his shop, drank his cup of coffee from one of the moving venders of that beverage, who always attend the bazaar, and then sat himself down at his ease within the small recess of his shop. His goods piled carefully and skilfully, he waited patiently till the Prophet should send him customers : while Time went ruthlessly by, he felt perfectly careless of his passage ; and if Fate ordained, that the sun

should set without his selling a piece of silk, or a single shawl, it never ruffled his temper.

The wearing on of the day was pretty accurately known by the falling of the sun's rays, broken and partially, through the interstices of the hollow tiled roof; but still more by the muezzin's cry, that announced midday and sunset. These broken rays of the sun have a very beautiful effect in some of the splendid bazaars at Cairo and Damascus, slanting amidst the deep shade and coolness of the scene beneath, filled with a rich and variously dressed host of many nations.

At midday, however, the trader of Ramla called again for his refreshment of coffee and a pipe, as home and its enjoyments he might not see till daylight was sinking behind the distant hills. To beguile the time in this fixed and moveless position, which is seldom ruffled save by a customer, who calls the arms, but not the legs, into motion, the merchants chat with one another, and grave and pithy sentences are flung to and fro, at every pause of the pipe.

But the most amusing part of the scene, at least to a stranger's eye, is, when the cry from the minaret rings through the long, gloomy bazaar—to see many of the merchants pass, in an instant, from a most indulgent smoking, musing position, to one of earnest prayer and abstraction. Throwing themselves on their knees, all mindless of customer, dervise, or hadgé, they turn towards the inner part of their shops, their goods lying all unheeded beside, and for about twenty minutes or half an hour forget the world, its bargains, and temptations. But the most dire perplexity is, when a chance customer stops, and looks desiringly on the votary's wares ; then comes the conflict between mammon and duty, between an approving conscience and the glitter of the gold mahmoudi. Many of the less devout will turn, interrupt for a few moments their deep abstraction, address their customer, recommend their wares, sell a good bargain with the most solemn and instructive cast of countenance, then fold in excellent order the piece of goods once more, and turning

away, resume with the same earnestness the thread of their devotions.

The bazaar, indeed, may be said to be the home of the Mussulman trader, the scene of his hopes and disappointments, his bitter cares and joys: in winter, his little pot of charcoal burns in the recess behind him; in summer, the camel, loaded with skins of water, moves slowly by, scattering the contents as he goes along on the dusty soil. What makes this scene of commerce more agreeable, is, that there is little rivalry, jealousy, or malice, among its inmates: if you pass by the shop of a Moslem, and stop to purchase at that of his neighbour, he regards it with a quiescent and unruffled air, and waits his turn with the greatest good-humour. The number of old men in these places arrests the attention; with so much calm and contentment in their looks, seated beside the bales of Persia and Hindostan, in the same attitude as they have sat for the last half century; their beard white as snow; the Koran often in their hands. But our worthy little host had not yet arrived at this desirable age: he could not number

more than thirty-five; and had a wife, much younger than this, at home. By his own account he lived very happily with her, having been married more than ten years; and her personal attractions were still fresh in his eye; and he always looked forward to sunset, the hour of his return, with exceeding pleasure.

We always observed that where a Turk was satisfied with one wife, the union was happy. There are sufficient reasons perhaps for this; there being no public dissipations or amusements to draw the husband's feet from his home: convivial parties, drinking, theatres, nightly revels, exist not in this land of temperance and routine: he has no external temptations to make his home seem dull or monotonous, and his own roof becomes the centre of his enjoyments and affections. The merchant had prolonged his absence on this occasion much more than usual; but the familiar converse of Christians was new to him, and he seemed to enjoy it. One pipe followed another, and Time flapped his wings in vain over the deserted bazaar and the little shop in which we were all gathered together, and our

voices were now the only sounds that broke on the silence of the place. He at last rose, wrapped his robe closely around his small figure, and begged us to make ourselves as comfortable as we could, with the blessing of the Prophet on our head.

And now we were left sole inmates of the bazaar. Of the many situations in which our long wanderings sometimes placed us, certainly this was one of the strangest. It was now late, and the starlight fell faintly through the hollow roof; but the long and lofty avenues of the bazaar were shrouded in darkness. Every foot-step had gone away long since; and our solitary light was the only one that glimmered around. The little Turkish merchant had such confidence in our honesty, that he left his goods in the shop, and they occupied no inconsiderable part of it.

But in truth this was the case with other depots besides that of our host, who had taken pity on the houseless traveller: there were other little shops or recesses, of which the doors were merely closed by their owners, who seldom

think, on retiring at night, of securing their property under bars and bolts. Now, had we been people distinguished for cupidity, here was a tempting situation; what could hinder us from taking the goods that most pleased our eye, mounting our horses, and departing swiftly over the wide plain without? Our lonely light fell on pieces of silk and cotton, shawls, and other articles of comfort and luxury, that were to shade our narrow resting-place for the night. This was better, however, than having an earthen divan for our couch, or the sand for our pillow. Alas! we were like Sindbad when cast ashore the only survivor, and he saw heaps of the precious cargo come floating to his feet, but among them nothing that could satisfy his hunger and thirst. We had a comfortless certainty of going supperless to rest, after a sultry and dinnerless day: no materials wherewith to set forth a meal were to be found in the spacious bazaar; the coffee-sellers were by this time buried in sleep, waiting for the dawn to resume their labours; and the dull fall of a fountain at the upper end of the

building was the only sound that met our ear. We were reduced then, as had more than once been our case before, to luxuriate on the pleasures of imagination instead of those of appetite. A very narrow and confined space is always death to the former faculty, whatever a few splendid instances to the contrary may prove : the “ Pilgrim’s Progress” was all imaged forth in a prison, so were the “ Thoughts” of the unfortunate Dodd ; but men of lower mark will always find that a boundless scene, a free air, the desert or the mountain side beneath their feet, and night, either in darkness or glory, around them—are admirable auxiliaries. But no spark of romance could be kindled within the walls of a silent and forsaken bazaar, whose gloomy length, as far as the faint star-light penetrated, discovered only dim rows of shops, where turbans hung idly on the walls, waiting for an Arab or Syrian head to fill them ; boots, of every hue, red, amber, and sombre ; fair ladies’ ornaments, the veil, and the sash.

We drew close the door of our very narrow confines to keep out the chill air, wished for a blazing pan of charcoal, heard the night wind

pass faintly over the roof, and amidst the deserted places of Ramla without, and then laid our heads on some of the good merchant's bales, to court the sleep that was now the only luxury the place allowed. Seldom was the first break of day more welcome than when it came into our hushed and gloomy abode, and we heard the opening of the heavy doors by our guide, who came to say that it was time to depart. We gladly left our narrow chamber, and on gaining the open plain without the town, the fresh morning air was deliciously welcome. We had gained the hills ere the sun rose full and cloudless on the extensive plain behind, covered here and there with villages and groves of trees, among which an encampment of wandering Arabs often pitch their tents, tempted by the fruitfulness of the place. At the distance of two or three miles from the town we had left, was the village of Lydda, near which we had passed: although of some note in the first days of Christianity, and the scene of some miracles, it is now a mean and insignificant village.

The hills, amidst which we had entered, were barren and rugged in the extreme; and their gloomy appearance, for they completely overhung the road, was increased by the dark and cloudy weather that succeeded to the brilliant sunrise. Some remains of ancient edifices were visible at times on the sides and summits of the cliffs: they seemed more like the fragments of strongholds than those of religious houses. Indeed, no monks would have had the bad taste to choose their site in so inaccessible and repulsive a scene, where scarcely the wild goat could find shrubs enough to browse.

We came after two or three hours to a very small valley, hemmed in by the grey, shapeless cliffs on every side. A few cottages of wretched peasants were here, who seemed to live miserably: a dirty, squalid interior, with a vile earthen floor. There had been more habitants here formerly, for some shattered and deserted cottages stood beside the others; and the few people had more the look of plunderers than industrious peasants. Few spots could be imagined more destitute of attraction than this:

in winter the cold must be great, and the many small streams from the near hills pour down in torrents; even now the wind howled with a most wintry sound among the wild declivities, and the skies threatened a torrent of rain. It was impossible to obtain any refreshment from these huts: milk there was none; wine was an utter stranger to the desolate hearths; and the bread was of too forbidding an aspect to be meddled with. The ruins, however, that occasionally came in view on the heights, relieved the unattractive nature of the path. One of the most picturesque objects was a Turkish mosque on the top of a lofty eminence at some distance: its minaret might be distinctly seen very far off:—on this spot was buried the prophet Samuel. By the natives it is still called by his name, and is regarded with veneration; and here anciently stood the town of Ramah, which, it is said, was the place of his birth as well as burial. It is true, there are no ruins of houses, or marks of former habitation about the place; but its date was too remote to allow of the slightest vestige to

exist at present ; nor is there in the whole of the Promised Land a single remnant of any edifice or place that existed in the remoter days of the Old Testament. The mosque standing on this solitary spot amidst some Arab dwellings, is another proof of the attachment the Turks feel to the burial-places of the memorable characters of Scripture history ; for there is no other reason why the mosque should be placed in this remote scene, where few worshippers can ever come. Whether there is a cavern similar to that of Hebron, that covers the graves of Machpelah, or only a tomb within the walls of the edifice, there is no opportunity to ascertain, as the Christian is not allowed to enter. If tradition is correct here, which there seems little reason to doubt, Ramah stood, like all other noted places in the ancient time, on a lofty site, in the choice of which, in such lawless times, security only seems to have been studied. The situation is fine and commanding, and looks over a wide extent of plain, hill and valley on every side. There are no trees around it ; for the Turks never take pains to

skreen the burial-places of the Jewish prophets, as they do those of their own saints or santons. Trees and delicious shade seem so connected with a Moslem's idea of an hereafter, that he loves, in every situation, even amidst the sands of the desert, to spread them over the ashes of the departed. At particular seasons, this people come here to worship, and in their solitary mosque call to mind the illustrious seer whose ashes were laid beneath, on the scene of his own Ramah, where Israel lamented over him.

Pursuing our way, we soon afterwards came to a small opening in the hills, where stood the poor remains of a chapel, in a low and sheltered spot, beside a very large and ancient oak, whose antiquity, if our guide spoke truth, was great indeed. It bore every mark of excessive age, and spread its huge arms, like a sheltering friend, over the ruins of the long-deserted chapel. Could a voice have been given to this venerable tree, with which a poet of the lakes would soon have invested it, it might have told of the march of the Saracen, with the koran and the thirsty sabre side by side ; then of the

crusader and the cross; the baron, the vassal, the monarch, pressing on to the battle for the barren and useless hills around; pilgrims and priests too;—myriads, in the many ages, must have passed beneath the shadow of the aged tree, for the ravine in which it stands is the only direct passage from the sea; and how few of the enthusiasts ever traced, that pass again!

CHAPTER V.

ARAB CHIEF.—SYRIAN PHYSICIAN.—ADVENTURES OF A LONDON MERCHANT.

WE were less fortunate, a few weeks afterwards, in endeavouring to pass another narrow defile, at no great distance from the one we had just traversed. We were stopped at the post of the well-known Abou Gosh. It was a hamlet, consisting of several dwellings, where this man, who is the chieftain of the small district around, as well as lawgiver, dictator, and sometimes, it is shrewdly said, free-booter, resides. He exacts a tribute as his undoubted right from all travellers who pass this way, and our horses were soon surrounded by this chief and his soldiers, who began to talk loud and fast. It was some minutes before

we could understand a word of what they said ; we dismounted, however, and sat down on the grass, while one of the soldiers was directed to bring some coffee ; and we were asked to stay and partake of some more solid refreshment, but, as we knew we should have to pay about ten times the value of the chief's hospitality, and as the dwellings had a villainously dirty appearance, we thought it best to decline the offer.

Abou Gosh, who did not in the mean time neglect his interests, pulled out a slip of paper from his pocket, with an air of deep importance ; and with much and earnest exclamation, he placed it in our hands, as an all-sufficient authority for his demands. The wily chief protested, that though he did not altogether comprehend its import, he had no doubt it gave him a claim on the purses of all Frank travellers. On perusing this extraordinary certificate, which was of very small dimensions, we could not help laughing heartily. Abou, who, though a great rogue, was a very handsome fellow, stroked his chin with his hand, fixed his eyes attentively on us with a look of ludicrous

importance, while my servant explained to him its meaning. It was written in English, by a reverend gentleman who, in the career of his mission for the fallen people of Israel, had passed this way, and certified to two individuals, his intimate friends, who are eminent for their wealth as well as zeal, and were at this time safe in their comfortable and luxurious homes in England, to this effect,—that when they should come to this wild pass, on their way to Jerusalem, they were to be exempted from paying any tax to Abou Gosh. They were addressed in full, with the title of esquires, and were assured that their reverend friend had received the most honourable treatment at the hands of the said worthy and well-meaning Abou.

The perusal of such a document in such a place—the exquisite care taken of it by the chief, than whom no moss-trooper was ever a greater thief, and the purpose to which he applied it, were irresistibly laughable. Abou did not relish our reception of his document, any more than we did the longing looks cast on our

baggage by himself and his lawless well-armed attendants. However, after a great deal of clamour and altercation, and the payment of a sufficient fee for the privilege of passing his small territory, we were allowed to depart, after having finished a cup of coffee, and repeated our assurances to the respectable Abou Gosh, that his document gave him no right to demand money of Frank travellers who might pass that way in future: which he answered only by a significant and unbelieving look, depositing it carefully once more in his bosom.

In his zeal for the conversion of the ancient race that dwelt in the holy city, the Missionary just alluded to did not always strictly suit his efforts to the time and circumstance. One day he was walking in the Valley of Jehoshaphat with a Rabbi—one of the most zealous as well as staunch defenders of the faith of his fathers, when, from conversing on the merits of their different creeds, by degrees a warm and fierce altercation took place. Heedless, in the heat of the contest, of the paths over which they were straying, they had approached the venerable and

elegant pillar of Absalom, and stood at its foot. The sight lent wings to the controversy ; to the Missionary's mind it brought back the memory of the ancient glories of his people ; and, animated by the impulse of the moment, he climbed up into the recess formed in the highest story of the pillar, and looking down, challenged his adversary to continue the argument. The latter, nothing daunted by the vantage-ground of his antagonist, stood beneath, and sternly confronted him ; and with voices loud enough to be echoed by the rocks of the desolate valley, they there carried on a solemn and warm dispute of nearly an hour, and ended at last with little more conviction than when they began.

His discourses were not always, however, so fruitless as on this occasion : some of his countrymen were moved, in spite of themselves, by his words, and the powerful and sincere manner in which they were urged. There were occasions when he was really eloquent ; and his fervid imagination aided the effect of his addresses on the minds of the Orientals.

In another land, perhaps, they would have

been received with more bitterness ; but here the family circle often gathered round him : the grey-haired Israelite, who would as soon have thought of making the Pacha a present of his strong box, as of turning from the Law of Moses, composed his countenance, and gravely gazed, while he heard his faith attacked ! From these interviews he returned, treading on air, and related, with a rapture almost childish, the success of his efforts, and that he had seen the tear of contrition steal down the cheek of his fallen people.

With a simplicity and singleness of heart that were often turned to advantage by his wily brethren, and a strange ignorance of the ways of this world, that exposed him to be made the prey of designing men, it is marvellous how he has pursued his career, without a single mishap, from the Nile to the extremities of Persia ; has been in the earthquake and pestilence, and passed amidst contending armies with impunity.

The love of antiquity and the picturesque were wholly absorbed in his one great object : three weeks within eight miles of the Pyramids.

he never once had the curiosity to visit them. When he stood on the banks of the Jordan, instead of admiring the beauty and straightness of its rapid course, and the rich valley through which it wanders, as other men would have done, he was only occupied with the highest interests of his perishing fellow-countrymen. He had sent word to the Rabbis, on leaving the city, that he was going to pray for their conversion on the banks of the ancient river. He accordingly knelt down there with ardour; but whatever the solitary virtue of such a deed might be to himself, it does not appear that it had any particular effect on the minds of the Rabbis.

A most interesting scene took place one day with the descendants of the ancient Rechabites, who found their way into his apartment. They were Arabs, of a tribe that had ever dwelt alone in tents, and had never mingled with any other tribe, or suffered wine to touch their lips, since the day of their ancestor Rechab, whose example the Prophet held out to the rest of the Jews. These Bedouin Israelites retained the faith of the Old Testament amidst the wild and

desultory habits of the Arab ; but these habits were peaceable ; and though they tilled no land, nor planted and drank of the vine, they were a regular and well-ordered community. To the Missionary all this was a source of inexpressible interest, and he listened with wrapt attention to the simple yet clear details of these men of the wilderness, who spoke of Heber the Kenite, whose wife slew Sisera, as the founder of their race ; and how, in a hot and thirsty land, they had continued faithful to the command to drink no wine for near three thousand years.

His course was onwards, however, in his own words, to the utmost bounds of the earth, wherever there were Jews lost in darkness and hopelessness. He stayed not on the banks of the Euphrates ; for had Babylon of old, in all her glory, stood before him, he would have regarded it not, had there been a desolate Jew sitting by the river side, and mourning over his fallen state. But, the misfortune was, he could seldom get them to mourn : the hardened creatures would not allow that they were bewildered or fallen, and were sometimes audacious enough to

retort the charge on himself. It mattered not ; tears or smiles of derision, a sincere welcome or persecution, all whetted alike his enthusiasm, and made the wilderness or the hovel, the prison or the palace, alike pleasant to him.

On he came to Shiras, tarried awhile there, and strove to fan into a flame the cold souls and lucre-loving minds of his ancient people, many of them established there in affluence.

Then to the city of Tebriz, where the prince royal, Abbas Mirza, became partial to him, and took it into his head to place him at the head of an Academy for the Belles Lettres, in the heart of Persia. It could not, in the nature of things, answer ; the regular, plodding, persevering habits required for such a situation, suited not the ardent and ever restless Missionary, who is doomed, though softer bands now chain him, never to know any rest to the sole of his foot.

The people of Bethlehem, always a turbulent and unquiet race, rebelled, about two years subsequent to this, against the authority of the Governor of Jerusalem. The scarcity of corn,

and the consequent want of provisions, was their alleged reason; but the fickleness and love of change so conspicuous in the people of this district, had as much to do with it as the famine, and these feelings were fanned by the wild and imposing chief who stopped us on our way through his sorry hamlet. The position of the town, on the brow of a craggy hill, afforded every facility for defence, and, although the Bethlehemites were miserably poor, and a small guard of Turks had always been thought sufficient for the quiet of the place, they made a vigorous and successful insurrection. A body of troops was sent against them, but as they did not approach too near, contenting themselves with firing their muskets at a respectful distance, the rebels answered in the same way, and the affair did not seem likely to be brought to a conclusion. But the Arabs inhabiting the surrounding districts, who are always ready for any change, joined the people of Bethlehem, and gave another face to the contest. As they came in on horseback, and on foot, with their long lances and arrogant boasts, the enemy

retreated, and the villagers set no bounds to their exultation. The good fathers of the monastery, in the mean time, had passed their days and nights in no very tranquil manner; all communication with the country was cut off; no visitor was suffered to enter, and no supplies to be received. Even the pilgrim dared not turn his face to the sacred shrine, or come near its precincts. However, the superstition of the people, and their long veneration for the monastery, and the sacred spot contained in it, prevented the slightest injury or insult being offered to its inhabitants; yet the earnest endeavours and intreaties of the latter to calm the rebels were wholly in vain.

In this state of things, the latter being now formidable, and every day gaining fresh strength, Abou Gosh, who had been an anxious spectator of the whole affair from the beginning, when he saw there were good hopes of success, drew his few soldiers together, and came to Bethlehem and joined the insurrection. He had some old grievances against the governor of the capital; and, as he was a bustling and shrewd

fellow, had some talents, and could tell lies and vaunt as well as any Arab that ever breathed, he soon gained importance and influence in the rebel force, till at last, as success crowned their measures, he was invested with the chief command. This was what the wily and turbulent chief had aimed at; and he had the audacity to persuade his followers to advance towards Jerusalem and besiege it. Away they marched from the rocky region and miserable village where they were posted, a motley crew of Christians and Infidels, Catholics, Greeks, and adorers of the Prophet, all mingled together, to go and attack the holy city, and compel the governor to come to their terms, and supply them with provisions. The chivalrous Abou was at their head—for the first time in his life the commander of an army, swearing and abusing by turns, and his dark Arab eyes swimming with pleasure at the thoughts of the fines or plunder he should exact from the governor. The latter laughed at their approach, as the strong and lofty walls of his city might

of themselves bid defiance to the insurgents, without the aid of the garrison.

They were soon before the gates, and sent in their demands, which were treated with the utmost contempt; and they would have repented of their temerity, had not the inhabitants of the city, who were also much straitened by the scarcity of provisions, the cause of which they ascribed to the governor, risen also and joined the insurgents. The governor attempted to repress the insurrection by force, as his garrison was not small; but the tide was too strong to be resisted: nearly the whole population rebelled, and opening the gates, admitted the Bethlehemite forces within the walls. Abou Gosh entered in triumph; he hardly knew how to bear his own dignity; there was some difference between exacting a few piastres of chance travellers, as a tax for their passage through his wretched village, with clamour and abuse, and dictating terms to the Governor of Jerusalem, shut up in his own palace, and this at

the head of a numerous body of forces. So much the better will it be for all future travellers, who, after overcoming the difficulties of the rocky and villainous ravine, emerge from it on the domain of the cunning Arab;—never more will he need to descend to mean and scanty exactions upon the solitary wanderer, or dwell in the rude hovels with his handful of soldiers. Leader and chief of an insurrection, he looked around him haughtily, chose good apartments for his accommodation, and kept up a kind of state. He sent a message to the governor for his surrender, at the sight of whose face a few weeks before he would have bowed down to the dust. Though a prisoner in his palace, the latter was too strong to be subdued, or intimidated. He had still his small garrison with him, but endeavoured rather to pacify the tumult, than to repress it by force.

Affairs continued in this state for some time, and the insurrection extended even to Jaffa, which was shut up and blockaded by disorderly crowds of the insurgents, but they found it too strong to enter or assail. They kept

possession of the city, however, for some time ; but neither could they take the citadel, if it might be so called, nor could the commander repulse them, till reinforcements came from Damascus, and forced them to evacuate and retreat rather faster than they entered. Abou led back the disorderly forces, or rather mingled in the rout, shorn of his honours, but not unprovided with plunder. He had too keen a relish for other people's goods and chattels not to make good use of the opportunities he had enjoyed. Since the days of the Crusaders, such a confused rabble had never entered the walls of the city ; and having long been held in close subjection by their Turkish masters, they had used with free licence the superiority they had for a short time obtained. The Bethlehemites once more took possession of their rocky village and its surrounding hills and valleys ; the Arabs went back to their homes. What became of the leader is uncertain : he had proved, as keenly as most men, in a short time, that life is a scene of changes : whether, as is very unlikely, he returned to his caves and straggling band of sol-

diers among the wild rocks, or, probably, finding himself richer and more powerful, set up on his own account on a larger scale, and with a more imposing aspect.

In consequence of these disturbances, few travellers ventured at this period into the country. They soon afterwards sustained an irreparable loss in the departure of the young Catholic guide Antonio from the city. He was a very vocabulary of all antique and illustrious spots both within and without the walls; and, as there was no doubt of their identity in his own mind, so he always looked for implicit faith in others. Possessed of good property, and independent of chance emolument, there was no servility in his manners, though an Oriental and a Catholic; his temper was ever gay and unclouded, and his fidelity could not be exceeded.

Soon after the arrival of a traveller, Antonio was at his side, and produced his book, which he always kept, containing a list of sacred places, with their names, ancient and modern, and all the circumstances for which they

were remarkable. As the catalogue was very voluminous, it was necessary to select for every day a few objects, either near or distant, for inspection : and nothing could exceed Antonio's surprise and almost horror on two or three occasions, when we presumed to doubt the identity of scenes which he had brought us a long way on a sultry day to see. " These rocks and caves ! were these really the places where the people of old fought with the Philistines : and that small valley, did so many thousands fall down slain there ?" " Sì, sì, Signor." " But the features of the places do not bear testimony to the truth of this." " Non è possibile," said Antonio vehemently ; there can be no possible doubt about it ; and his look declared what his words dared not express, that we were audacious heretics. He was grievously annoyed by these doubts and surmises ; but they will now no longer trouble him, for he has lately taken it into his head to forswear his wanderings, to relinquish the pleasures of life, and devote himself to a monastic career. With this view he quitted the capital, his only parent

being lately dead, and turning his back for ever on his native place, set out for Egypt, in order to enter the Catholic convent at Cairo. Here he arrived, and was admitted as a candidate, having brought a letter from the one in his own city.

He soon assumed the monkish habit, entered on the possession of his cell, and the practice of the rigid duties of his new calling. It was the desire of change, or of seeing a new country, of which he had heard so much, that induced the poor youth to forsake the breezy and healthy hills of his own romantic land, for the sorry cell and stupid life of the monastery, and the stifling and sultry atmosphere of the place.

Of the various adventurers who come to this country to seek a fortune by their talents or their industry, few comparatively succeed. Medical men stand the best chance, but the market was, at this time, overstocked; and, of all nations, Frenchmen make their way with the best grace and the best fortune :—a striking instance of this, is the success of Dr. Cha-

boiceau, who left his native country near fifty years ago, and has continued from that period to reside among the faithful, not in the capital of Egypt, but in that of Syria, where success is far more difficult to attain. He has lived there just half a century, the only European in the place, among a people the most bigoted and insolent of any in the land: but, without changing his religion, he has contrived to gain the good graces of the true believers of all ranks, male and female, and is now a very wealthy man, generally respected and esteemed. We found him at our visit very old, but in perfect possession of all his faculties, having attained the age of eighty years.

He arrived at Damascus a young man, wholly dependent on his profession, with little ready money* in his pocket, but, what stood him in better stead, a good address, and a general talent of pleasing his patients. He soon acquired the language, and, as the Orientals hold medical men, especially those whom they think skilful, in the highest pos-

sible respect, he, grew into notice rapidly. He performed some very good real cures, and a far greater number of imaginary ones, for, out of sheer love of medicine, or of being let blood, gentlemen in Damascus, and ladies also in as great and far greater degree, were fond of believing themselves ill. The Turks of both sexes will often insist on being blooded, and hold out their arm with eagerness, from the certainty that it must be beneficial to them. A physician, who was to assure them they were in good health, and was to succeed in persuading them so, would soon lose all his practice. So did not Dr. Chaboiceau; he never spared his lancet or his medicines, taking care that the latter were often of a harmless kind. His reputation attracted the envy and jealousy of the Turkish practitioners, who were naturally enraged that a Frank and an infidel should take away their patients. Their malice and their calumny, however, availed nothing; the doctor thrived visibly and rapidly.

Finding that he began to grow rich, and that his prospects were bright, he resolved to cleave to the land that had thus favoured him, and abandon all thoughts of his native country. It was a wise resolution, for the state of medical knowledge and practice in the place was very low; and as to surgery, the native surgeons found it was much safer, in general, to leave accidents to kind Nature's healing, than to attempt to mend them. Although the Frenchman has been termed a physician, he was only a surgeon in his own land, with a slight knowledge of medicine; but quite sufficient, added to some share of assurance, for the few and simple diseases of the country.

Years, that passed as swiftly amidst the sameness and simplicity of an eastern life, as in the streets and gardens of the gay capital of his own land, added continually, though slowly, to his wealth; and he adopted a better style of living. His garments and horse, the most ostensible signs of Turkish affluence, were richer and better accoutred,

as he had occasionally to proceed without the city to visit his more affluent patients at their country-houses. The fair sex were not the least numerous of the latter class; and few men could write a more faithful and interesting detail of Oriental manners, passions, and enjoyments, than Chaboiceau—of the strifes and mysteries of the harem, of dark jealousy, or of faithless love. His long and unceasing practice, of nearly half a century, from the Pacha to the carrier of water, or the seller of clotted cream,—amidst the many revolutions of the government, rebellions, and deeds of cruelty,—afford him materials, had he only the imagination, to enable him to emulate the memoirs of Anastasius or Hadji Baba.

In the eastern cities, the strict etiquette, that forbids the idea of a lady visiting a gentleman at his dwelling, is now dispensed with in regard to the privileged physician. The fair and afflicted patients crowd his audience-chamber. Passing through the streets robed and muffled to the eyes, the outer coverings are

thrown aside when they enter, and the features and figure are no longer concealed. This was, perhaps, a chief source of the doctor's wealth; and though jealousy or envy, it might be supposed, would sometimes threaten or annoy him, he conducted himself with so much prudence and good tact, that during his long residence he has rarely received insult or ill-treatment.

The apartment where we visited him was well-furnished in the style of the place, without being costly; the small court was a model of neatness and cleanliness, with a fountain, and surrounded with a quantity of flowers and shrubs. The dwelling had the appearance of competence and ease, and the general reputation he had in the city of being rich was, no doubt, just. The old man was extremely well-dressed, and had perfectly the aspect and air, as well as the costume, of an Oriental. He seemed in the possession of excellent health and strength, at the age of fourscore, and from his appearance bade fair to complete a century.

Whenever his demise takes place, the field will be open for another clever practitioner ; few men, however, will ever succeed so well as the doctor, who has certainly played his cards admirably, and built his prosperity on the wants as well as weaknesses of the faithful, without the salvo of embracing their religion, or even of paying the slightest attention to any of its observances.

He has never married, even in a city the charms of whose women are celebrated, and where there are Christians as well as Turks. Although he mingled occasionally in the society of the Damascenes, where he was always received on a good footing, yet there could be no companionship where not another European save himself resided. It is strange he should never have sought society, as well as consolation beneath his own roof in the affection of a wife. The dwelling and the man had somewhat of that appearance called bachelor-like at home, and deemed forlorn and comfortless. There was a young woman of about twenty visible, good-looking, and of a dark complexion, who

appeared to have the superintendence of domestic affairs. The old gentleman has long abandoned all thoughts of *la belle France*, and consented to leave his ashes in the country that has proved so favourable to him; and his wealth, having no relatives near him, will probably devolve to strangers, or find its way to the coffers of the Pacha.

A yet more singular character than the Syrian physician made his appearance at Beirout, about twelve months after we had quitted it, and was received into the house of our friend Mr. A—, the Consul-general. He loved, like the Frenchman, the single state of blessedness, but he never cared to tarry long in any place; and quickly shook the dust from his feet, and departed, with as little object or purpose as when he first arrived. The following relation may appear at first scarcely credible, were not the individual, as well as many of his adventures, personally known to several travellers, and to the consuls, to some of whom he brought recommendations. His name is not mentioned here, but if his feet have been

so fortunate, after all their wanderings, as to touch once more their native land, he will recognise the detail of some of his adventures. He was a merchant in the city of London, and in opulent circumstances ; a single man, of middle age, with a florid, full, good-natured face, and stout habit of body. He had not only never quitted his native shores, but seldom been at a distance from the metropolis. He received a letter from a friend who had come to Calais from the French capital, pressing him warmly to leave town, and meet him at the former place. After much hesitation he at last complied, and, for the first time in his life, turning his face towards another land, he landed safely in Calais, much to his own surprise.

After a few days passed here, his friend, being obliged to return to Paris, intreated him to be his companion thither, intimating at the same time the folly of leaving France without seeing the capital, and setting forth its many wonders and pleasures in the most enticing point of view. The temptation was very

strong, and after two or three conversations on the subject, proved absolutely irresistible. To the capital he came, and found its stock of novelties for some time inexhaustible, and each day fatigued himself to excess in exploring them. The beauty of the palaces, and the gardens in the middle of the city, excited great delight; nor was he insensible to the claims advanced by the French of being the first cooks in the world, for though he had spent nearly the whole of his days in the city, and been accustomed only to plain English dinners, he joined in his companion's eulogium on the exquisite *gout* of many of the dishes that were set before them.

Our merchant had already been two months in the capital, when an Englishman, with whom he was acquainted, invited him to take part of a *voiture* with him for Lyons, assuring him that he would see a great deal of delightful country in the route. As the good citizen was easy to be intreated, and now felt really like a man on the stream, without any particular object but amusement, on whatever side it

should chance to present itself, he willingly complied, and travelled leisurely to Lyons. Here a view of the silk^c manufactures, and other objects, could not fail to be interesting for a few days, till his fellow-traveller, who had also no pursuit but novelty and variety, being rather wearied with Lyons, proposed that they should continue their route southward. The other was startled at the thought of going so far into the interior; yet being so many hundred miles from Calais, it was a pity to stop short, and not see the whole of France from north to south, from one sea to the other; and so onwards they came down by the Rhone to Avignon, and thence by degrees to Marseilles. This was to be the ultimate of the merchant's travels; he had neither desire nor ambition left to venture farther, but thought only, after a short stay, of tracing his steps back again the way he came, and turning his face towards his beloved city. But fate, that seemed to take a pleasure in driving him about the world, throughout the whole of his long subsequent travels, ordered

it otherwise. At Marseilles he accidentally met with a captain of a merchant-ship, whom he had known intimately in London, having often partly freighted his vessel with goods from the Levant. The captain was, much astonished to meet with his old friend and employer so far from home, and on a journey of pleasure too, by which all his old and favourite habits were violated; a journey, moreover, that had nothing of business attached to it. His vessel was just ready to sail for Alexandria, and he asked Mr. — whether he would like to go with him and see Egypt, assuring him the voyage would be very pleasant, with fine weather, and that Egypt was a very strange country.

The wise man hath said, “Of making many books there is no end;” had he lived in this day, he would have said, of wandering to and fro to see strange things there, is no end, also. So it seemed with our traveller—a new land, a new world, almost, as he thought, to be explored, and the enjoyment of his friend’s society during the voyage, were powerful attractions,

and he took his resolution accordingly. In a few days the vessel sailed, and the shores of Europe soon disappeared from his view under the influence of a favourable wind. It was the first time he had ever adventured fairly on the wide ocean, and, as the Grecian Isles swelled in glory on the wave, with the sun setting and rising on their shores, he thought, in the fulness of his heart, that great part of his life had been wasted ingloriously, and that he had but now begun to live.

At last, after a rapid voyage, they entered in safety the port of Alexandria, and the intrepid merchant, landing amidst a stifling heat and clouds of dust, was sorely annoyed, at first, at finding no inn fit to put his head into. He procured, however, with a little difficulty, lodgings in the house of a Frank. Having a letter of introduction to Mr. L. the excellent Consul, he received from him the kindest reception, and a daily invitation to his table. There were several English travellers at this time in the place, so that he did not want for society; then came excursions to the baths,

to the bay of Aboukir, and, the time passed away much pleasanter than could have been anticipated in so wretched a city, and amidst a country so tame and unsightly.

Three English travellers were about to set out on a journey into Upper Egypt, whose subsequent disasters, from the rebellion of the natives, have been noticed in one of the publications of the day. Being not a little amused, as well as interested with the travels of Mr. —, they invited him warmly to join their party, if his spirit of enterprise would carry him so far.

So strongly had the love of travelling, by this time, taken possession of his mind, that what he would at first have shuddered at the idea of, was now a matter easy of achievement. In company with the English party then, he quitted the town, and in a few days arrived at Cairo. With the capital of Egypt, the first oriental city he had seen, he was greatly struck : the prodigious throng of camels, goods, donkeys, and Nubians on the quay at Boulac, where they landed, formed a *coup d'œil* posi-

tively marvellous. The narrowness of the streets also, where an Egyptian in one window may shake hands with a neighbour in another on the opposite side of the street, amused him. Then the crowds of various nations jostling each other, screaming and cursing; some mounted on donkeys, others on dromedaries or buffaloes, had such an effect on his nerves, that it was with no small pleasure he found himself safely housed in the dwelling assigned him for a lodging.

It was impossible, among the many curiosities in Cairo and the neighbourhood, to avoid visiting the Pyramids: this, of course, occupied a long day: there were other lions also of high interest—but time and tide wait for no man. A *cangia* being hired, the party set sail, and advanced slowly and pleasantly as the wind and their own inclinations served, visiting town and ruin in succession. But when the wind failed, and the *cangia* lay motionless, and the Nile was spread like a current of silver beside them casting back painfully the vivid glare of the sunbeams, and not a breeze was felt, the merchant, as he panted beneath the shade of the

awning on the deck, could not help contrasting the strange and silent scene around him with the loud hum of men, the ceaseless passing of busy feet, the joyous eagerness and bustling life of Cheapside and Fleet Street, where every hour was full of excitement, and each step brought well-known and friendly faces before his eye. He gazed with a sigh on the melancholy desert before him, where all was sadness and silence, and for the first time regretted that he had left his home in the city, to come so far, and wander so wildly. But these thoughts were not longlived; they vanished if a favourable breeze sprung up, or some new excitement occurred.

At last they came to the ruins of Thebes, and passed several days there, roaming among the vast remains during the day, and returning to pass the night on board their vessel. But the tranquillity of their voyage was soon to be broken, and in a most unexpected way. They understood, on arriving at the cataracts, that disturbances had broken out among the natives; but, apprehending no danger, they re-

mained at Essouan a few days, visiting the memorable things in the vicinity, and undecided whether they should pursue their journey to the second cataract, or retrace their steps, and be satisfied with what they had seen, when the insurrection broke out into deeds of open violence.

The people who inhabit the territory both above and below the cataracts, as well, as those of the numerous villages along the shore, rose in rebellion against Mohammed Ali, the Pacha of Egypt. Headed by one or two aspiring and discontented chiefs, they resolved to bear his tyrannical dominion no longer; his various and vexatious taxes had fallen heavily on them, and they, as well as the greater part of the population, had long wanted the power more than the will to throw off the yoke.

It was a rash and daring attempt, the first that had ever assailed the power of the Pacha from this quarter. Success attended it at the beginning, as, from the weakness and long habits of abject servitude, to which these people had patiently submitted, very few regular troops, Albanians or Turks, were stationed there. The

great Sheichs, however, who were at the head of the insurrection, talked of no less than dethroning the Pacha. The commotion spread rapidly along the shores of the Nile, as well as farther in the interior; and our travellers, unsuspecting of peril, had the misfortune to fall into the hands of a body of these tumultuous forces. They protested they had no concern whatever in the war, and were merely strangers, travelling innocently for their amusement. The ignorant and exasperated rebels declared they were friends of the Pacha, and probably spies, and could have no good design in being there. The result was that they were detained, with threats of being put to death, which in such a lawless state of things it was not at all unlikely might be fulfilled. In this state of suspense they resolved not to wait the event of the durance, in which they were kept, as the making them a head shorter was no pleasant prospect, and dark and ghastly were the ideas that harassed the citizen's mind. They were confined in a tent, and being badly guarded, fortunately effected their escape in the

course of the night, and soon left their captors a good distance behind. They returned to the town of Essouan; and, as all parts were alike suspicious, they took refuge in the island of Elephantina.

The alarm and trepidation of the merchant during this whole proceeding, are not to be expressed: with fervent and sincere good-will he cursed the passion for wandering that had led him thus far; and, like Hassan, the camel-driver, might have exclaimed from his soul,

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Fleet Street’s shops he bent his way”

to so distant and fearful a region.

But the safety of our travellers was by no means secured even by their escape; for in the beautiful island where they had taken refuge, they were obliged to be on their guard against any designs of the insurgent Arabs and Nubians, and to mount guard all night long, lest they should approach unperceived. Mr. —, during his residence at Beirout afterwards, spoke very feelingly of his sufferings and agitations during those hours

of alarm. All night long, with a fusil on his shoulder, was he obliged to take his turn at mounting guard while his companions slept, and pace to and fro the shore of the island in the Nile, listening to every sound that came from the opposite side of the main land, and fancying it might be that of an enemy, and gazing at every light that glanced from the cottages, lest it might be some signal of attack, the prelude, perhaps, of their destruction.

In those solitary moments of agonising suspense, in the midst of a howling waste of rocks and ruins, and overcome with fatigue and weariness, his thoughts fled to happier and safer hours, when, with his bottle of port beside him, and a good fire blazing in the chimney, he sat in his peaceful parlour, soothed by the cheerful voices, the roll of carriages, and the sparkling of lights in the street: he dreamed not then of Egypt and its wildernesses, and, as the event proved, its still wilder people.

The distant sound of the cataracts, as our traveller paced up and down during his wild watch along the shore of the island, now came on his

ear through the silence of night. His situation might have made a sketch that a painter would have delighted in: his companions sleeping around, worn with fatigue; the intrepid merchant, though with more substance than valour generally abides in, looking fearfully around, and starting almost at the echo of his own footsteps.

He was relieved from guard, when the hour came, by one of the others, and lay down joyfully on the sand to seek repose and oblivion. There was no alternative; a spirit of adventure had brought the party into the scrape, and they must bear it or get out of it as they might. His companions, however, were younger and gayer men, and endeavoured to make light of the whole affair, which if they escaped safe out of, would be a pleasant and romantic thing to talk of afterwards. But at the age of fifty, Cicero shed tears at his exile in the Isle of Sicily, and Seneca bewailed his, at a distance not much greater; Mr. — neither shed tear nor turned pale, whatever he felt; he still wore his clear ruddy aspect and tranquil good-humoured look, which had sat so many years

on him, and which not a space of three or four thousand miles between himself and home, or the still more threatening sabre of the Nubian savages, could banish.

Besides great and almost incessant fatigue, the party were here reduced to very short and very poor commons,—in fact, barely enough to sustain nature ;—a little rice, bread, and Nile water. It has already been said that our citizen had neither wife nor child ; and therefore, had he fallen obscurely on the distant shores of the island, no eye would have wept over him, no heart would have been rent by his loss. He felt the luxury of this independent condition, and not unfrequently took occasion to observe, that he was perfectly free from all species of restraint to go and come whither he chose, and stay in the desert or in the city as long as suited his taste. It could not be said, had the insurgents attacked them here, that he would have found an obscure tomb : the ruins of a small but elegant temple were on a conspicuous part of the rock above his head ; but he had no taste for antiquity : it was remarked that in the

temples of Thebes^e and Tentyra he had gazed wildly around him at first with an astonished look, as the Mansion-house^e and the Exchange were probably the finest specimens of architecture he had seen before setting out on his journey.

The state of siege or surveillance lasted several days, till our party were relieved by the disappearance of the insurgents, and took the opportunity with eagerness to resume their voyage; the idea of seeing the second cataract being now laid aside. Had they, at an earlier period, proposed to go and trace the sources of the Nile, their companion would have embraced the proposal with pleasure; but now his taste had faded, at least in this direction, and he instantly acquiesced in the proposal of retracing their steps without delay. They set out down the river on their return, and took leave of the neighbourhood of Essouan. It was cause of deep regret that they had not been able to pay one visit to the Island of Philæ, of whose beautiful antiquities and singular situation they had heard so much, as almost to have induced them to encounter fresh dangers in order

to have a look at it: but though two leagues only of desert lay between them and the isle, it was too hazardous an attempt. All the villages along the banks being in a state of disturbance, the travellers scarcely ventured to land for two or three days on their return to obtain provisions, their stock being utterly exhausted.

It was with feelings of no common joy that they saw the minarets of Cairo appearing in view in the distance, at the end of their rapid return, during which no farther molestation had occurred. They mounted their donkeys at Boulac, and blithe and gay Mr. — felt, as, all his perils ended, he cantered freely onwards to his old lodgings. After such privation and alarm, the narrow, dirty, dusty streets of Cairo, with their hordes of black, yellow, and bearded faces, looked nearly as cheering as the Strand. He sat on his divan of soft cushions, and reposed his feet on the carpets in the spacious apartment; and with the Turkish pipe, of which he had learned to be fond, felt the sweetness of the change, than which a greater could hardly be conceived. The

rugged and sleepless beach, the hot sands, the distant and fierce howls of the rebels, had all passed away, and luxury and security were now his own.

But our merchant was not an indolent traveller, and had no thought of wasting his hours in the indulgences of Cairo, however the senses or the inclination might look that way. A stay of a week to recruit himself he deemed quite sufficient, and to this he added the enjoyment of two or three dinner-parties at the Consul's and the Frank merchants', for his convivial habits made him very acceptable at the tables of the latter.

He resolved to part with his companions, having seen enough of the capital and the country, and proceed down the river to Alexandria, and thence enter on a new career. He arrived at the port in a passage-boat of the country, and found there a Syrian vessel ready to sail for Acre; a voyage, with a good wind, of only a few days. This offered a favourable occasion for seeing part of Syria and the Holy Land, and without farther deliberation he em-

barked. It was the first time in his travels that he had been alone ; and not as yet having engaged any servant, and being unable to speak a word of the language of the crew, it might be deemed a situation of some inconvenience. But Mr. ——— seemed to have taken for his motto, “ Venture all, and all will be achieved.” The wind was favourable, and they soon came within sight of the mountain whose fame will be eternal ; and had the merchant been an enthusiast, he had here given vent to his emotions.

Enthusiasm was a quality, however, he never discovered any tendency to : the mountain and the valley, the wilderness and the river, all came alike ; and after a few exclamations of surprise and pleasure, were regarded tranquilly, and new objects were desired. From Acre he went by land to Beirout, and was very kindly received by Mr. A ———, the Consul, to whom he brought a letter of introduction. Here he was met by my friend, to whom he related the long and various detail of his travels.

It was strange, that having previously been accustomed to such a routine of life, in which

one day was perhaps a sample of every day, during thirty years, he should have endured the great privations and fatigues of such a journey, and the excessive heats of the climate, not only without illness, but with the enjoyment of the most perfect health. He had neither lost his tendency to corpulence, his ruddy complexion, nor his continual good-humour. And what is quite as singular, it was impossible to discover that he took any particular pleasure or gratification in any object that he had seen, or that he had any sufficient inducement to undertake so arduous a journey. He spoke of the Pyramids and the ruins of the temples with as much want of interest, as if they had been every-day objects. The only feeling his travels appeared to have excited in his mind was that of pride, that he had gone so far, and seen so many things; but of any charm that antiquity had thrown around them, or any glorious recollections that they kindled, he felt no more than an Arab would do if suddenly planted in the middle of the Exchange, or Charing Cross. From Bei-

roul he was soon about to start for Palestine, in spite of many persuasions to the contrary, as the troubles in that country rendered the attempt at present not altogether safe, and there was no companion bound on the same path.

Yet alone and companionless, the intrepid merchant was resolved to go, as he could not consent to quit the land till he had seen Jerusalem; and to have to say he had seen it when he should be once more at his home in the city, and amidst a circle of his old companions, would be such a luxury. From the latter city his plan was to proceed straight to Damascus, having heard much of the beauty and luxury of the place; and after staying a few weeks there, he should go, he said, to Vienna, where he expected to meet with an old friend, who had been some years settled in that city. Of the distance or nature of the journey from Damascus to Vienna he appeared to have very little notion, and spoke of it with perfect composure. By this time, if no mishap has cut short his travels, he has probably

passed through Turkey and Hungary, that most weary overland journey, has once more entered the Thames, and 'is now seated in peace amidst his household gods, one of the greatest as well as most persevering travellers of the day.

CHAPTER VI.

VALLEY OF AJALON.

THE path that leads to the sepulchres of the Judges is more pleasing than many of the walks around Jerusalem ; there is more appearance of verdure, and trees, and cultivation ; but the tombs themselves stand in a very wild situation. No shadow, not even of a rock, is spread over these long enduring relics, in which tradition has placed the ashes of the rulers of Israel. They consist of several divisions, each containing two or three apartments, cut out of the solid rock, and entablatures are carved with some skill over the entrance. No richly carved relics, or fragments of sarcophagi, remain here, as in the tombs of the Kings, and their only use is to shelter the wandering

passenger, or the benighted traveller, who finds no other resting-place in the wild around.

There are scenes of far higher interest at no great distance from this place : advancing along a bare but highly picturesque country, we saw a few people busy in the small valleys, in which there were here and there well cultivated fields, and scattered plantations of fruit-trees: the sides and summits of nearly all the hills, that rose thickly around us, were untouched by the hand of man, but they seemed to have been touched by a more withering hand, either of the tempest, or of an offended heaven. There were cottages and hamlets there,—for the people of Palestine, like those of all hilly countries, seem to prefer their bold eminences to the more sheltered vales, for a residence. In the way we met a numerous group of female peasants, old and young; they seemed to be going to their daily labour; and their olive complexions, mean dresses, and pallid features, over which their dark hair loosely hung, realized no dream of oriental beauty.

The heat became rather oppressive, and we looked in vain on every side for a clear spring, or rivulet, as a momentary relief. After turning to the left and proceeding many miles, we came at last to the summit of a lofty eminence that commanded a wide and varied view on every side. It is one advantage of this confined and romantic territory, that almost every summit presents many an illustrious scene at a single glance. But the scene on which this hill looked down, though not very high, was particularly memorable: in front extended a spacious and fruitful valley, of great length, and, as far as the distance might allow of distinguishing, one of the most picturesque and varied in the land, after those of Jordan and Esdraelon. Tradition has always preserved its identity as the valley of Ajalon, in which was fought the great battle between Israel and the five kings of the Amorites.

The valley is of sufficient breadth and compass to allow of a numerous host engaging in its bosom, and presents as fine a field of battle as

two armies—the one fighting desperately for conquest, the other for life and all that was dear to them—could desire. The Amorites were probably surprised by Joshua, as they were encamped in this valley, and hemmed in by hills on each side; as it is said, “he came suddenly upon them,” and after a bloody combat, they fled along the valley, whose inclosed space on each side afforded great advantage to the pursuers, as it appeared to be from twelve to fifteen miles in length. On the summit of a lofty hill, that stands in the bosom of the valley, Gibeon is supposed to have stood, as there is a hamlet, of the name of Gebé, still standing on the site, and this site agrees with the description given. The fields of battle of the ancient Israelites often derive an added interest in the stranger’s eye from the striking and beautiful scenes on which they were fought. The scenes of Bethulia, of the valley of Elah, the plain of Esdraelon, and the noble mountain on which Samaria stood, are all splendid subjects for a painter’s hand, as well as a prophet’s description. And the peculiar and bold

aspect of this memorable valley must have greatly aided the effect of the miracle, for which nature made it a fitting theatre: the high hill of Gibeon, towards the west, overlooked the whole region, and the royal city on its summit, just before besieged by the confederated kings, was the meed for which both armies fought,—the one to save, and the other to destroy. It may be inferred that the day was waning on the ruthless slaughter of the vanquished, who fled along the valley, to the opposite extremity to which their conqueror had entered; and while the declining rays were thrown redly on the lofty hill and the royal city that crowned it, Joshua, to fix as it were a point on which the sinking sun might be said to rest, as well as to show more vividly to his allies a proof that Heaven fought with Israel, uttered that sublime command, “Sun, stand thou still on Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon,”—the latter being a proof that the day was near to set.

It would seem, too, that the destroying storm from on high fell not on the flying Amorites,

until, issuing forth from the Valley of Ajalon, and the narrow and inclosed places between the hills, they descended on the wide plain beyond. Here, scattering themselves far and wide on every side, they could more easily avoid the pursuer's sword, from whose edge the greater part would have escaped, but that they fell by a divine arrest. This valley is better inhabited and cultivated than most other places in the territory, and seems to enjoy a more equal and healthful temperature: and no change has probably taken place in mountain, valley, or hill, since that day.

It is not a little surprising with how little sympathy or interest we look on the fields of the victories of Israel, as far as regards the people by whom they were gained or lost. The associations of our earliest days, so connected with their history, and the certainty that the hand of Infinite Power here descended to the earth, to work its designs, are sure to kindle a feeling of deep interest and awe. But this is very different from the impassioned emotion created on the plains of battle in many

a heathen land, where the love of freedom or of glory led men to the achievement of heroic deeds. Of such motives the annals of Israel and Judah preserve little remembrance; their mountains and valleys are rendered glorious, not by the ascendancy of mind, but by the interposition of an indulgent Heaven in behalf of a selfish and ungenerous people. But liberty was a thing they never knew or desired to know, save in the days of the Maccabees, and some of the Judges. The subjects or rather slaves of their wavering and worthless race of kings, who, with a few splendid exceptions, made them bow down to every idol and abomination, or led them, in burning hate and rivalry, against their kindred people. Had Judah or Israel, ever fought with half the valour, or committed half the slaughter on the Assyrians, or Babylonians, that they did on each' other, they had never sat down by the rivers of Babylon, or remembered Zion in the day of their affliction. Whenever an invasion of the great neighbouring powers took place, it was difficult to collect more than a handful of people to resist them; but the mo-

ment a king of Israel plucked a quarrel with his brother sovereign of Judah, each town and hamlet poured forth its population, and hundreds of thousands flocked to their banners.

Even to the last, intense pride and despair alone urged them to fall amidst the ruins of their city, rather than yield to the hated Romans; but it is difficult to discover which gave them the most pleasure,—the shedding the blood of the besiegers, or of their own countrymen within the walls. The curse, that has taken away the beauty of their land, seems also to have taken the valour from their spirit; for no instance exists, since their desolation, of Jews being found in arms, for any cause of their own, or in the service of any potentate in whose dominions they dwelt. The Russian general, Suwarrow, it is related in his life, once raised two regiments of Jewish cavalry in the Crimea; but the men, otherwise finely made, and of sufficient physical strength, were so invincibly awkward in their movements, and looked on the edge of battle so strangely, that he was obliged to disband them as useless.

Great efforts have been made for some years, and much money has been spent for the regeneration of this singular and fallen people; or rather, it should be said, for their conversion, of which their establishment in their native land is to be one of the results. The zealous and benevolent people in England have a right to dispense their donations to any land under heaven, and there is no doubt a peculiar charm in the idea that they are scattering them over so hallowed a country; that they are aiding to bestow on it a fresh glory, second only to that of the last dispensation of life and truth. It is a pleasing but entire illusion. The mind of the Israelite is steel'd at all points against the pure and simple faith of Christianity; he will converse and reason with the missionary, in perfect good temper, and will in most cases give him a very civil reception in his house; for any one who comes under the protection of the English power is sure to see every Jewish eye turned kindly on him; so much influence has the former in the East. We have even seen the descendants of the ancient people receive

copies of the New Testament, sit on the divan by the side of their converted countryman, listen calmly to his remonstrances and persuasions; promise to consider the weighty and long disputed subject, and read and judge of it maturely for themselves. All this sounds very plausibly and sweetly to the ear that is ever on the stretch for the happiness of the fallen Hebrew, to whom words and promises cost nothing; but in every instance he stopped short sternly and decidedly of the threshold of conversion; long cherished, devouring pride, like a spectre, stands in the way that leads to Calvary, and warns the wanderer back.

It was curious to see the enthusiasm that sometimes, ~~animated~~ the missionary, when he dwelt on the ~~theme~~ of their ancient glory. His eye grew wildly bright and impassioned as he told of the triumphs of Israel of old, and the sublime things wrought out by Heaven for its chosen people, such as no other nation could boast of. Here they were on common ground: and the spirit of the speaker seemed to be caught in a measure by those who listened to him; and

the grave aspect of the Rabbis became quite complacent. If the traveller at that moment had spoken of the things that had since been done, and had asserted that Olivet, Tiberias, and Emmau, were far brighter scenes than those of Kishon or Samaria, what a chillness would have fallen on every spirit! what an apathy and indifference on every countenance! We have seen those, whom their own people deemed apostates, and the Christian world hailed, and justly so, as proselytes, give way to extravagant joy on the summit of Sinai, and be quite borne away by the rapture of their feelings,—yet remain calm, unaffected, and tearless at the tomb of Him who died for them. Yet they were sincere, and professed no more perhaps than they believed; but they could not immediately root out the ancient leaven from their hearts—they could not so soon learn to “take up the Cross and follow Him.”

The eastern Jew, continually dwelling amidst and visiting the scenes of revelation, is accustomed, from his infancy, to look on them with scorn and aversion; and an appeal to those

places, as convincing and resistless, is like attempting to move a Hindoo by pointing to objects that are considered vile by his caste. And this veil of pride and hatred is to be removed by the words and visits of two or three zealous men ! and this is to be the forerunner of the conversion of the whole people, who are to come and inhabit once more their long forsaken land ! Was such a mandate to go forth now into the many lands where Israel dwells in luxury, and eats of the fatness of every thing, and directs the tide of commerce, builds herself palaces, and, like Tyre of old, opens the flood-gates of her wealth to the courts of kings,—it would occasion as much dismay and sorrow, as the Persian's mandate did of old, in the fair Esther's time.

What would such a multitude do on the barren shores of Palestine ? The zeal for their faith or country would be as dust in the balance compared with the loss of comfort and affluence : they would think of the pleasant regions they had exchanged for the desolation around them, and feel as exiles instead of patriots.

However, it is a pleasant thing to spend money in any way for such a romantic land ; and the ardent details of half-persuaded and softened Israelites, are perused with infinite satisfaction, coming, as they do, fresh from those vales and hills whose very name is a charm.

Leaving the hill, we bent our way back to the city, over a succession of barren hills divided by wild and pleasant valleys. The weather, that had been fine and sultry, began to change, and the sky to be overcast with clouds : the rain soon fell in torrents, and we were glad to look round for a place of shelter. This was easily to be found, though neither hamlet nor cottage was nigh. In one of the glens was a lofty and spacious cave, that afforded the same shelter now, as it had done probably to many a pilgrim and Bedouin before. Many parts of the country are full of these caves, which served the ancient Hebrews, no doubt, as places of shelter and concealment during the invasions of the Philistines. It was a comfortless situation, and we looked wistfully at the pelting of the rain on the bare declivities in front, on which,

however, we were happy not to be now exposed. In about half an hour the rain ceased, and we pursued our way; but that way no longer wore the same pleasing appearance, so much did it lose by the absence of the brilliant rays of the sun. Under the gloomy canopy of clouds, the rocky and silent wilds wore a sad aspect; and it was with pleasure we saw the walls of the city at a short distance.

Passing through the western gate, the narrow and ill-paved streets of the city looked miserable after the rain, that had formed small pools in their many crevices; and they were quite deserted; some faces only, cautiously gazing through the latticed windows, gave sign of dwellers within. It is the most silent city possible; and the stranger often loses his way in its winding and crooked lanes, for want of some land-mark, if it may be so called, to direct his steps. There is one mark, however, that cannot be mistaken; its vicinity is distinctly perceived at some minutes' distance, namely, the quarter tenanted by the Jews. The Prophet says, that the most delicious odours and per-

fumes await the believer in a future state: the latter could not do better, when dying, if he wished to enjoy the contrast exquisitely, than desire to be brought to the Jewish quarter. The senses are fearfully assailed; every breath of air is loaded with unhallowed scents, from coffee-houses, eating-houses, mechanics' shops, and a thousand nameless domiciles: and glad is the stranger to make all haste away.

One day, a handsome young man, in whose fine Grecian countenance it was difficult to discover any trace of the Israelite, besought me earnestly to buy some of the contents of his box, in which, amidst silks and spices, were stones from the Dead Sea, and fragments of rock struck off from some of the famous spots around the city. His earnestness amused me much; it looked like the blending of both dispensations with the pleasant things for the senses; a true Hebrew, any thing to turn a penny; he would have sworn, for the sake of a few piastres, to the identity of every bit of stone in his collection.

A more interesting sight presented itself in

another street, and showed that Oriental beauty had not wholly forsaken the city. As we were passing by, the door of a bathing-house was opened, and a number of young Jewesses issued forth; their white veils were carelessly turned aside; a few of them were remarkably handsome; with the large dark eye, fair complexion, and raven hair, which are their characteristics in every land. In visiting any of the dwellings of this people, their women do not observe the restraint and distance of the other natives; they make their appearance in the apartment, speak freely to the visitor, and do not, as their ancestors of old, draw the veil over their features.

The Bazaar, at no great distance from the gate of St. Stephen, was sometimes an interesting lounge, though by no means a gay or splendid one; it was low and dimly lighted, dirty, and offering but few temptations to purchase. It was the centre, however, of the scanty trade and manufactures of the city: silks from Damascus, cottons from Egypt, spices and articles of fancy and taste from many parts of the East;

vegetables and fruit ; fine cauliflowers as could be seen in Covent-garden market ; grapes and oranges ; relics for pilgrims, with singular and graphic plates of miracles and sainted places. The Turk was calmly seated here in his little recess ; his feet covered with soft slippers ; waiting with the utmost nonchalance for a stray customer, and looking as if he felt that he was lord of the ascendant here. The Jew, in his little shop near by, stood bolt-upright, his quick eye thrown on every passer-by, and mammon looking out from every line and wrinkle of his face. The most obsequious civility marked his deportment ; and his yellow turban, the badge of his race, was bowed lowly to his customers.

There is one quality in which, like his ancestors, the Jew is by no means deficient, namely, in a proper taste and apprehension of the excellencies of wine. Does the stranger desire light wine, of fine quality, white or red, such as grows in the territory of Judea, or does he prefer the more potent and exquisite produce of Lebanon, they can both be procured at

short notice ; but it must be done secretly, otherwise the Turk would seize the hoard ; and if he did not denounce the vender, would insist on sharing his cellar with him. The white wine of Jerusalem, as it is called, is of very good flavour, though rather sharp. Chateaubriand praises it as exquisite ; but in this the Viscount's imagination deceived him, as it did about some other things in the land.

One morning we chanced to draw near the hamlet that stands among the rocks on the opposite hill. Some of the habitations are only caves cut out of the rock ; the rest are wretched mud hovels, with flat roofs. No solitary tree, or blade of verdure, or spring of water, is seen on the grey soil, to screen from the sultry rays the miserably lodged people, who are all Arabs. While we stood on the spot, just beneath the caves and hovels, amidst which the squalid inhabitants stood or sat, listlessly gazing into the valley beneath, it was impossible not to remember the rich and magnificent appearance this very place must have had of old ; for here, tradition says, stood the groves and altars raised by

Solomon to the false gods of his many wives. It was difficult to conceive the motive of these people in fixing their residence here : there was no pasture for even a few cattle or sheep in the vicinity : and no plunder could be hoped for so near the city. The mid-day sun beat full on their cavernous dwellings, out of which were thrust the bare heads of age and infancy.

Not the dragons and satyrs of the Prophet, making their rest amidst the ruins of Babylon, could be a more humbling and miserable proof of the change that human glory, when coupled with crime, must undergo. “ And here were deep and shady groves, and beautiful women stood beneath them, and ‘offered sacrifices,” said the guide, who knew well how to arrest the attention of the stranger. “ Then was the curse deeper than either faith or fancy had pictured,” the latter might have replied, as he turned away, and sought a more sheltered spot.

Under the few trees and overhanging rocks of the ravine beneath, there was a partial shelter. This is the boldest glen around the city, and was the scene of every dark crime and

cruelty the tyrants of Judah committed on their people. On the sloping sides of the mount of Judgment and the mountain of Offence, stood the numerous spectators of the accursed rites that were performed here : on the latter eminence the grove of Moloch stood, and the temple in which worship was offered up.

The steep rocks on each side excluded from us any view of the city or surrounding hills ; even the dome of the beautiful mosque was invisible, and there was a stillness of excessive heat at mid-day, in the lonely glen, unbroken by the tinkling of a camel-bell, or the cheerful song of the mule driver. The dull chant of the priests, in some of their ceremonies or processions, might be heard from within the walls above ; but far more piercing and impressive came the mid-day cry from the minaret of Omar : it rung round valley and rock, round sepulchre and cavern, and all the city's desolate places, as if in mockery of her fall,—“ There is but one God ; he alone is great and eternal, and Mohammed is his Prophet,—come to prayers !” “

As we afterwards wound our way slowly up

the acclivity, we rested, for a few moments, at the only fountain beside the walls; perhaps it was the group seated there that drew our attention. Three Jewish inhabitants of the place, one very old, and two young men, were seated on the bank, just above the clear and beautiful stream that gushed out of its source into the wide rocky basin beneath. It was chance, no doubt, that drew them there, as the only cool and refreshing spot around, for it was not likely that they would look with any veneration on the place. The old man seemed to be one of the travelling pedlars in the vicinity, by his staff, and the long white beard that fell to his waist; and the two young men were listlessly reclining beside him. They presented a picture of poverty and dejection, as well as recklessness of heart, veiled to every surviving proof that their law and traditions are passed away for ever: with more cause than when in the land of their exile, might they here have said, sitting on the very hill of their fame, "By the waters we sat down, when we remembered Zion, and thought of her glory."

CHAPTER VII.

TOMB OF RACHEL.—CAVE OF MACHPELAH.

THE western path from the city is extremely bare and desolate; it passes over the valley, or rather plain of Rephidim, that extends for many miles, having scarcely a single habitation on it. One dwelling only on the left, meets the passenger's eye, and sometimes tempts his footsteps, in search of refreshment in the sultry waste: it is a mean Turkish coffee-house, where the reviving berry and the pipe are ready at a moment's call. The Arab, prowling cautiously in the neighbourhood, or hastening to the banner of some chief, turns aside to this solitary auberge, as it might be called; but the pilgrim more ~~carefully~~ and warily approaches, for it has rather a suspicious look.

A few miles farther on, are the ruins of the village of Rama; fragments of walls, only a few feet high, are now the vestiges of the place where the prophet so beautifully predicted the mourning for the Innocents. There is a spot on the plain, at no great distance from this ruined village, of much higher interest,—the tomb of Rachel. It is one of the few places where the observer is persuaded that tradition has not erred; as it fulfils literally the words of Israel in his last hour, when dwelling on the only indelible remembrance that earth seemed to claim from him. The long exile, the converse with the angels of God, the wealth and greatness which had gathered round him, all yield to the image of the loved and faithful wife: “And as for me, Rachel died by me, in the way from Bethlehem, and I buried her there.”

The spot is as wild and solitary as can well be conceived; no palms or cypresses give their shelter from the blast; not a single tree spreads its shade where the ashes of the beautiful mother of Israel rest. Yet there is something in this

sepulchre in the wilderness, that excites a deeper interest than more splendid or revered ones. The tombs of Zacharias and Absalom, in the valley of Jehosaphat, or of the Kings in the plain of Jerem'iah, the traveller looks at with careless indifference; beside that of Rachel his fancy wanders "to the land of the people of the East," to the power of beauty that could so long make banishment sweet; to the devoted companion of the wanderer, who deemed all troubles light for her sake.

The Turks have surrounded most of the burial-places of the chief characters of the Old Testament, with more pomp and stately observance than this: over that of David and Solomon, on the declivity of Zion, a mosque is erected; the cave too of Machpelah, at Hebron, is covered by a large and ancient mosque, and all around, the soil is held inviolable. The cave is in the middle of the interior of the edifice; its dark and deep entrance only is visible; and it is rarely entered, even by the steps of the faithful. For more than a century, not more than two or three Europeans are known, either by daring or

bribery, to have visited it; the last was an Italian Count, a traveller, who, by paying very high, was allowed by his guardians to tread the floor of the mosque, and descend into the obscurity of the hallowed cavern; this was thirty years since. It is a great pity that so memorable a scene should be closed to the curious eye; the bold valley in which the ancient town of Hebron stands is often visited by the steps of the pilgrim and the traveller; but the penalty of death to every Christian who enters within the walls of the mosque, is too dear a payment for the gratification. The cave is said by the Turks to be deep and very spacious, cut out of the solid rock, and that the resting-places of the celebrated patriarchs still exist, and are plainly to be discerned.

The tribute paid, however, by the followers of the Prophet to the burial-place of Rachel, is far more sincere and impressive, than walls of marble or gilded domes: the desire which the Turks feel that their ashes may rest near hers, is singular and extreme. All around this simple tomb, lie thickly strewn the graves of the Mus-

sulmans. A trait such as this, speaks more for the character of this people, than many volumes written in their praise ; for it cannot be for any greatness, or wisdom, or holiness, in the character of her who sleeps beneath, (for which qualities they show so much respect to the sepulchres of Abraham, of David, and his son)—but simply for the high domestic virtues and qualities which belonged to Rachel : she was a devoted wife and an excellent mother, as well as the parent of a mighty people ; and for these things do the Turks venerate her memory.

It is a scene of no common interest, when a funeral train issues from the gate of the city, and, passing slowly over the plain of Rephidim, draws nigh the lonely sepulchre, with an earnest desire that the parent or child whose remains they bear, may sleep in a spot so venerated. Was a Jew to cross the procession, at this moment, he would be treated with deep curses, and looks of hatred and scorn, by the very people who are about to kneel around the ashes of one of his ancestors. Deeply fallen nation ! forbidden even to draw near or bow down at

the place that is full of the remembrance of its ancient greatness. So rigidly are the Jews excluded from entering the monument, that the four arches which support the simple dome have been filled up. The band of mourners stand round the place, and the turban is bowed to the earth, while the funeral wail passes over the solitary waste, solemn and impressive, as if the spirits of the prophets themselves had come back, and saw the desolation of their land.

No slender pillars of wood or stone, with inscriptions in letters of gold, are here; not a single memorial, which this people are otherwise so fond of erecting in their cemeteries. It seems to be sufficient, that they are placed beneath the favourite sod; and small and numerous mounds, over which the survivor sometimes comes and weeps, mark the places of the graves. If it be beautiful, in the splendid cemetery of Père la Chaise, to see the widow or the orphan planting flowers over the ashes of the departed, and bathing them with their tears, it is surely more impressive to see the Oriental, in his simple and flowing garb, like that worn

perhaps in patriarchal days, mourning over the lonely grave in the wilderness, where human pride and vanity cannot come.

As great a privation as the being debarred a sight of the cave of Machpelah, is that of being excluded from the area of the mosque of Omar. It is thinly planted with trees, and, contrasted with the nakedness around, has all the appearance, from a distance, of a cool and beautiful garden. 'Often had our eyes turned with longing on this spot. We had seen the faithful, both men and women, walking there, greatly to their satisfaction : such a verdant place, in the middle of the city, was, to use an old simile, like a little green isle in the sea. It commanded splendid scenery also, being on a considerable elevation above the rest of the town, on the summit of Moriah. It had a perfect view of all the valleys and the hills around. It was risking life, however, to enter this place ; but one evening, soon after our arrival, not being aware of this prohibition, I passed within the gate, and had advanced some way into the garden, if it might so be called. It was a lovely evening,

and there were many people walking indolently in the spacious area, and beneath the trees ; several women, with long white veils and graceful figures, were among them. It would have been delightful to have felt the cool of evening come on in such a spot, and watched the sun go down over the barren summits to the west, but this was denied ; for I suddenly felt a hand laid rudely on my shoulder, and, turning, saw a young Turk with an enraged aspect, and two old men with him. The former spoke sternly and fast, and did not seem disposed to loosen his grasp ; but my declaration of being an Englishman seemed to produce some effect ; and one of the old men mildly interposed, and bade me fly instantly, a mandate which the youth repeated with more arrogance, and which was soon obeyed, for to linger there was full of danger.

Vexed to the soul at this exile from the forbidden walls, there was no alternative but to return to the cold, naked walls of the convent. And then what was passing there, was not of so refined and attractive a nature as to drive the images of fountains and shades from the

thoughts. Among the ceremonies observed at the feast of Easter, that of washing the pilgrims' feet was one of the most curious. It took place in the evening, in the chapel of the convent." The superior had been dead some months, but his substitute officiated in his stead; the number of candidates was much fewer than on former occasions; for this year the Armenians formed the most numerous party, the Catholics and Greeks hesitating to journey so far, on account of the perilous times. The pilgrims, of all ranks, were arranged in the church, each seated in a chair, with a small white cap on his head, his feet bare, and his countenance moulded into a state of devout expectation. The superior having exchanged the dirty rope with which he is generally girded for one of silk, from which a white towel is suspended, kneels down on a small footstool of white silk, and, seizing the foot of the pilgrim, covered with the dust of so many memorable places, plunges it into a vessel of warm water. In this operation he is aided by two or three monks, who kneel on the cold pavement on each

side of him. Mumblings and blessings are muttered all the time, in a low tone by the superior's lips, and in a higher cadence by those of the zealous assistants, the pilgrims, at the same time, keeping up a kind of recitative, in all possible keys.

Most of these men had a sun-burnt, worn, and anxious appearance, as if they felt the enterprise in which they were engaged to be the most awful and important event of their lives; on which even the brightness of their future state in a great measure depended. In truth, it was a great undertaking to many of them, whose wives and families were at that moment in Spain, Russia, or Denmark, whither they must wend their weary way back again. This ceremony tends to exalt the poor devotee in his own estimation; for the superior, having washed and carefully wiped the feet, kisses them ardently, and pronounces a benediction on their owner. Then all the monks of the convent come and kneel on the pavement, and press their lips also on the feet of the happy and enviable man.

Then followed an excellent supper, in which

the priests waited most attentively on their visitors : the table of the refectory was, on this occasion, particularly abundant, and the good wine was not spared. Cheerfulness and sociality quickly succeeded the dull ceremony ; it was difficult to say, whether the tongue of priest or pilgrim went the fastest. Many a tale was told, and hardship recounted, on one hand, and vigil and marvel related on the other, till peril, privation, and distance, seemed to disappear from the thoughts of both.

The most interesting hour was that, however, in which the marble pavement of the rotunda was covered with the crowd of devoted admirers. The light that was cast below was very brilliant, and showed this concourse of wanderers from many nations, mingled with priests, monks, Turks, Arabs, and Syrians. The showy dresses and weapons of the Osmanli, his calm and serene features and moveless attitude, were contrasted with the impassioned expression and lively gestures of those around, in their poor and religious garments. The women also of the different persuasions were there, all

dressed in white, the looks of some bent on the ground, and the eyes of others wandering curiously on the various and animated scene. This was the hour of monkish triumph, as well as that of relics, flowers, and incensed objects of all kinds.

Some drew nigh with rapid and eager footsteps, and with the air of men who were conscious that the end of their toils was before them. It was easy to see that others hesitated long ere they ascended the three marble steps, that seemed like barriers between them and their long cherished hope. They knelt on the pavement, and turned an imploring eye, not on the priest, for the priest was nothing here, but on the sacred chambers within, where the light fell, and whence hushed sounds issued; the slender pillar met their eye at the entrance, that marked the spot where the stone of the sepulchre was rolled away for ever. It would have been cruel to break on the blest illusion that then filled the minds of these people; it had been better to bid their necks bow to the scimitar, than tell them that this bright entrance had

no resistless charm for guilt, no balm for remorse.

One old man, whose hair and beard were white, and who seemed to have come from a very distant home, was observed to bend long beside the first marble step that conducted within. Numerous votaries passed him, of both sexes, and one of the priests came and whispered in his ear some words of encouragement ; but the old man still lingered, as if a long life of crime had then risen before him, or he doubted there could be mercy at so late an hour as this.

It was not a little interesting to observe how changed were the looks and gestures of many of the people, when they issued forth from the interior of the chamber. A triumphant smile was on the features of some, perhaps, of more sanguine and buoyant spirits : the deep and settled dejection with which others had entered gave place to hope and serenity ; the step was quick, the hands unclasped, and the eye no longer bent doubtfully on the floor.

Mingled with these were very many who blended devotion and interest together in the

strangest way : recovers in grain, on whose mind past things sat a little uneasy, but who had no idea of even coming here, without making it turn to some future account. While their hands were clasped in exceeding sorrow, and their eyes uplifted, they held, fast clenched, many a pleasant and secret article of barter, that was to be embalmed by the same devotions and hallowed by the same rites as those by which their crooked spirits were to be purified.

Among these was one of our servants, Demetrius, a bigot to his faith, and ready to shed his blood in a dispute about it; but cunning, watchful, and the best driver of a bargain in the whole country. In his visit to the sepulchre, he had absolutely loaded himself, and he was a very powerful man, with relics, rows of beads, crosses, and other objects, of more or less massiveness or size. I saw him kneel at the spot, where, in spite of all his interested feelings, he could not help yielding to keen and bitter emotions; it was a true battle between mammon and his faith. With his strong short frame and broad shoulders, bowed like those of

an infant, and his shrewd bright eye streaming with tears, he yet grasped his beloved objects with a fervent grasp. The large hands laid on the sacred shrine were crammed with the abundance of precious things, whose value, however, chiefly depended on this ceremony; and while they trembled with emotion, the mind of Demetrius was no doubt calculating, at that very moment, in the midst of his repentance, how much his gains were likely to be.

He had left a young wife and child in Greece. His wife, with many a sigh, waited his return, though hope was prolonged and baffled. She was not quite aware, perhaps, that his mind was thoroughly occupied in turning every stone in his path, if it were possible, into money. For this he was ready to wander over the face of the earth; and he did wander, year after year, till he grew gradually rich, and now actually keeps his carriage in the south, rolls in wealth, and entertains travellers at his table. When I was in Greece, his wife came to me to inquire, with complainings, after her absent husband. Were his feet on the mountains of

Syria, or in Turkey, or Bagdad? It was difficult to say, save, that he was prospering, and that the hour of his return was uncertain: of this she seemed to be fully aware. She was well dressed, and very plain in person; but Demetrius always said he was indifferent to beauty in a woman.

Once only, in the course of several years, he returned to his native isle of Zante, in order to receive and dispose, among his countrymen, of a large quantity of blankets, which he had purchased in the Levant. He had scarcely landed on the quay, when he received two disastrous pieces of intelligence: the one was, that the captain of the ship had turned false, steered into another port, and sold the blankets on his own account: the other was, that his only child was just dead. Demetrius sat down and wept bitterly; he had not yet seen his wife; but by the fierce looks, that were cast seaward, and the muttered imprecations, mingled with the low lament for his first-born, the bystanders said that he wept for the loss of his blankets far more than for his child, and that

his tears would not have streamed thus down his full cheeks, if his beloved cargo had just then been entering the port. The endearments of his young wife were quite insufficient to detain him at home ; and during his second absence he travelled with us ; the loss of his cargo was to be redeemed, and it might be said, heaven and earth were moved in order to effect it. When in Cyprus, he resolved to purchase a large quantity of the finest wines, which he was sure to sell to great advantage among the Europeans at Constantinople. The wine was cheap enough, being that excellent old white kind which is so much prized in Europe ; but Demetrius saw clearly, after some reflection, that it was in his power to save good part of the price. We were at this time, as being English, very kindly treated by the Turkish authorities, and feared no injury to our own persons, while the wretched Greeks, both high and low, fell beneath the edge of the scimitar. There was now a pause in the bloody work ; and the oppressed people began to breathe freely again. The wine which Demetrius intended to buy,

belonged to a young man of good family and possessions, whose father had not long before lost his head; and the purchaser having studied his character a little, chose his part with considerable ingenuity. Having selected the several pieces he preferred, he waited on the owner in the evening, with a flushed countenance and menacing look, and told him that he must have the wine at such a rate, naming a very trifling sum. The Cypriot, surprised and indignant, protested against this; when the other declared to him the peril of his situation. His masters, the lords Inglesé, were men not to be slightly treated: they had influence with the Turkish Governor; and he, the merchant, very well knew, they had only to make a complaint, and his head would no longer be on his shoulders by the morrow's sun-set.

The merchant was perfectly terrified; he was well aware that there was much truth in this: his father's fearful fate came before his eyes: it was far better, he thought, to lose his wine than his life; and without another word, he

very peacefully consented to see his old and choice wine shipped, in order finally to console the spirits of the faithful.

This is a long digression from the place where the devout Demetrius was left, in the midst of his devotions: wife and home were certainly not then in his thoughts: the glare of the lamps, the throng of pilgrims, and the chanting of priests, were all unheeded, for the man was humbled and repentant. But the moment he quitted his kneeling posture, his dark eye flashed with joy, and he hugged his now golden relics with far greater ardour than he would his Zantiot bride, if she had that moment put her head within the rotunda.

CHAPTER VIII.

SEPULCHRE OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

ONE morning, very early, we paid a visit to the Sepulchre of the Virgin Mary: it is a spacious grotto, cut out of the solid rock, and divided into two apartments. Several steps lead down to it from the surface of the valley. It was at the time of a solemn ceremonial, and to be present it was necessary to be early at the spot, for it was not yet five in the morning. We scarcely expected to be very richly repaid for so untimely a break on our slumbers: for the sun was scarcely rising over the beautiful Mount of Olivet, when we threaded our way through the narrow streets of the city, and descended the slope into the glen beneath. The

air was chill and unpleasant ; we were the only strangers, no doubt, who thought for a moment of the keen atmosphere or the rising sun, for those around were too deeply intent on the sacredness of the place, and on the ceremonial which was about to be commenced.

Descending the steps, we found ourselves under the first cavernous and gloomy roof. This was low, and cut with great care out of the rock ; and the air was rather close and sultry. There was nothing of the gloom and solemnity of the tomb, however, about the place ; for the number of silver lamps suspended from the roof and sides cast their glare on every nook, cranny, and relic, of this curious and skilful scene of priestly art. Dull, solemn, ceaseless voices of the monks chanting, came from the inner apartment, as if they issued from the bowels of the earth ; fresh pilgrims entering at every moment, increased the crowd of devotees, and the air grew more stifling and oppressive. It was interesting to see these people, of both sexes and countries, so distant and widely separated, pouring down the declivity of Mo-

riah, and advancing along the romantic glen at its feet, in order to be present at the scene.

The monks had full employment ; there were altars belonging to each of the three rival religions, Greek, Catholic, and Armenian ; several fathers were stationed at each, and it seemed to be a point of rivalry which should be most devout, and make the most noise. The clang of voices rang through the chambers of the grotto, with a sufficient proportion of nasal notes mingled with them. Standing by the sides of the silver altars, each attended by their own body of Christians, the priests could not help casting at times angry and rival glances at each other. The hands clasped their books of devotion or melody, which the constant use of chanting rendered perfectly familiar ; but the eye glared at times beneath the dark cowl, for Christian charity has no place in the hearts of these men.

One night, when in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, fatigued with the vain and heartless ceremonies, I entered one of the small chambers, in which two Catholic priests were

seated before the fire, evidently fatigued with the devotional exercises in which they had been for some hours engaged. One of them, an elderly man, with his arms folded, and his cowl drawn closely, for the sake of warmth, round his face, was gazing fixedly on the half-burnt embers. We began to speak of the ceremonies that were now going forward; the younger monk spoke freely about them. I happened to observe, that the fine chanting of their order far surpassed the miserable and nasal singing of the two rival orders. "The Greek and Armenian," said the elder, breaking at once his silence, with a bitter and scornful laugh, "are they not a set of wretches? how should they sing?"

There was an expression of deep hatred in the tone and manner in which this was said. Poverty exasperates the spirit; the Franciscans felt they were growing poor, and with a sorrow and malice they could ill conceal, stated that their funds were daily declining, and their influence diminishing, while the other two bodies were growing more rich and ostentatious.

In the tomb of the Virgin these feelings might, however, have been suspended: on the present occasion, the successors of St. Francis certainly had the advantage; and their full and rich tones might be heard to some distance down the silent valley without.

Of the two apartments of the grotto, the inner one was more tastefully decorated; for here was the Sepulchre of the blessed Virgin; a rich source of profit and superstition: it cost us four dollars merely to see it, and be there at this memorable hour; and if all the pilgrims paid in the same proportion, it was a good morning's work to the convents. Here also, in niches cut out of the solid rock, stood the tombs of Anna and Joseph, with those of two or three minor saints; a silver lamp was suspended over each of them; and their light mingled with the light of day that now struggled through the doorway. Perfumes were profusely burned in silver censers, and their odours, filling the place, did not render its air more pure or welcome.

The small silver altar, massive candlesticks,

and other ornaments, gave a rather costly air to this chamber, though the clouds of perfume that floated round, half hid every object from the view. Some of the fathers had been all night engaged in solitary devotions here, and appeared heartily glad at being relieved by the arrival at sun-rise of their fresher brethren. The sides of the rock were in some parts hung with tapestry, and in others cold and naked; for the bed of the river Kedron was close without, down which, during the winter rains, a shallow torrent ran.

The ceremony was long and tiresome, and our patience was on the wane, though that of the rest of the auditors seemed only to increase with exercise. But their chief attention and devotion were directed to the tomb of Mary.

In justice, however, to the good feeling as well as taste of the pilgrims, it may be said that the emotions manifested here were very different, in intenseness and sincerity, to those displayed by the same people at the sacred sepulchre on Calvary. There, the passions of the

soul came forth without disguise: the proud and cruel man, the poor peasant who had begged his way from his far distant home, as well as the rich merchant, forgot alike all distinctions of rank, and listened alone to the voice of conscience. No confessional chair, even of the holiest saint, ever drew the veil aside from the human heart half so sincerely, so nakedly, as this narrow resting-place.

Put over the tomb of the Virgin, it was not thus: it was a beautiful instance of the triumph of truth over the errors and efforts of Catholicism; there was a deep reverence here, but no strong or vivid feeling, where the ashes of the Mother of Christ, as they all believed, reposed, and whom they were taught to adore almost in an equal degree with the Saviour. We afterwards saw, during the celebrated year of Jubilee in Italy, the demeanour of hosts of these men, when they visited St. Peter's, and each sainted place within and without the walls. Their zeal and diligence were incessant; at every hour, at every turning of the streets, they were met with, in eager and breathless groups.

When the Pope, on the great day also, blessed the countless multitude from the church of the Vatican, there was a stillness and a solemnity like those of the grave. But the feelings that then agitated the pilgrims, were not to be weighed in the balance for a moment with the resistless emotions felt round the hallowed rock.

The sun had by this time risen above the barren hills without, and fell on the precipices and olive trees of the ravine, while within the gloomy chambers of the grotto, it was still dim and chill. The declivities up which the votaries now passed to return to the city, might have afforded them a far more instructive lesson than the cave they had left. On each side of the path were numerous and simple memorials of the oppressed and ill-fated natives of the city. They had just come from worshipping in splendour, it might be called, with silver altars, clouds of perfumes, in the mausoleum of Mary; while here, the ashes of the Jews were scattered thickly beneath rude stones, trampled on by every foot, on the barren side of what was once their haughty mountain of God.

Though the morning was somewhat advanced, the air was yet cool and fresh, and we took advantage of it to bend our way at random, at least without a guide, through some of the more untenanted parts of the city. It is difficult to find a place that contains so many inhabitants and dwellings within so small a compass as Jerusalem; they seem to cling with tenacity, and with some of their ancient fondness, to the very brink of the declivities on every side; certainly, as in former times, the utmost use is made of every inch of ground, and nature has been very niggard in this respect. Ascending from the labyrinth of narrow streets, up a gentle acclivity, we found that the summit commanded a singular view of the interior of the city, amidst which appeared more ruinous and desolate spots than one could have previously imagined. Directly in front, was a large reservoir of water, supplied from the ancient cisterns, several miles distant. Steps led down the sides of this reservoir to the water, which forms now, as it did in past time, a chief resource of the surrounding inhabitants during the dry weather;

and was, no doubt, one of those ancient pools, so frequently alluded to in Scripture. It was thickly inclosed by dwellings on every side, and shut out from view, except from the immediate vicinity; and was evidently hewn out of the rock.

All around the acclivity, the soil was so thickly covered with tall shrubs and wild verdure, that it was a little difficult to make one's way; the prickly pear was the most frequent. This fruit seemed to fatten on the desolate soil, that was seldom trodden by any foot, and was composed partly of piles and fragments of ruined habitations, that had stood and fallen here ages ago. The flat terraced roofs of the city, the domes and minarets of the mosques, blended with the cupolas of the churches, came into view from this ruinous eminence, where the stranger might well sit for hours, and muse on the strange and various picture at his feet. There, to the east, stood the palace of Herod, amidst its gardens and palm trees, the home of the beautiful Mariamne; close to the forsaken spot where it stood is now a mosque, and that mosque is built on the ruins of a Christian church. To

the left, on the site of the tall and strong tower built by the Crusaders, and now garrisoned by the Turks, stood the palace of the King of Israel.

Each solitary place around was once trodden or dwelt in by a prince or a prophet, and alike echoed to the splendid prophecies of future glory, or the warnings of unutterable woe. There is not a single guilty and fatal passion or deed that man can know, but what is told of by these poor remains. There is no place where both worlds seem to be so blended together, or rather where the veil of the present one is so drawn aside, as amidst the ruins of Jerusalem. The voice of the angel of the Apocalypse, who stood on the ocean and the shore, and told that time should be no longer, could hardly thrill through the excited fancy more than the wail of a lost nation, that seems to come forth from the sepulchres and desolate places of the city of God, and tells of this world sacrificed and eternal glory cast away.

The air had now become sultry, and the bare and ruinous places around afforded no shelter.

The ancient reservoir of water, discoloured as it was, was a welcome object ; and the few women who came there at intervals, seemed to seek it as their only dependence ; for the dwellings that stood around were mean and wretched. Turning from the place, we retraced the path to the monastery. This spiritual fortress, as it might be called, seldom admitted the beams of the sun, and always had a cold and gloomy appearance, on entering it from the brilliant atmosphere without. Time always hung heavy within its walls : not so heavily to us as it did, perhaps, to a noble visitor who dwelt there about a year before. She came with her lord ; the most beautiful and adventurous traveller that had ever explored the East. Her foot had stood beside the farther cataracts of the Nile, even in the interior of Nubia, and had not flinched from the sandy wilderness or the burning soil ; and then wandered to Damascus, the flower of the East. The latter city could only be visited in a Turkish dress : the spirit of curiosity overcame every difficulty as well as danger, and the fair traveller was presented to the

Pacha as an English youth of quality. He gazed on the elegant form and features with surprise, and, not suspecting the disguise, pronounced the stranger to be the handsomest Frank he had ever beheld.

To a refined and accomplished woman, in whose character daring and gentleness were exquisitely blended, this journey must have presented rich and various sources of gratification. Unlike Lady Mary Montagu, she could not visit the harems of princes, but it was perfectly easy to traverse the enchanting walks and river sides around the city, to observe the many costumes and manners of the people in perfect liberty, a privilege never possessed by a European female before. The inhabitants, indeed, never would have endured the sight of a woman from Europe in her own garb.

From hence to Jerusalem was a change, as far as the aspect of nature went, from the promised land into a joyless waste. A portion of the monastery had been lately fitted up for the accommodation of female visitors ; but the tent of the Arab, with its simple drapery, carpet, and

sincere welcome, would have been, perhaps, a more tasteful and acceptable home. In the monastery, naked walls and floors, miserable arrangements, and a total want of all the *agrémens* to which an English lady is accustomed, repelled the least idea of comfort. Can any thing more unsuitable be imagined, than the residence of an attractive and romantic being beneath the roof of Franciscan monks? What has romance or beauty to do with the dull, passionless, and fearfully monotonous lives of such devotees? Una, dwelling amidst the tenants of the forest, or the Princess Pekuah amidst those of the desert, present situations parallel to the above; but the former simile is, perhaps, the most just, for these fathers have done every thing in their power to render their human form as ungracious and uninviting as possible. If one met them in the street, with their corded loins, bare and ill-looking feet, old rusty garments, and mortifying looks, it would be advisable to move on the other side of the way, in order to avoid the contact.

If report said truly, this monastic residence

was found more dreary than the shores of the cataracts or the wilds of Syria. Even the airy and sprightly attendant, whose green parasol scared the Count Forbin from the ruins of Thebes, could find no field for her pretensions or attractions within these dull walls. Father Giuseppé exhausted, as he often told us, by so much watching and chanting, had no eye for the seductions of the senses : his thin pale face, ever restless step, and shrill voice, told of a man intent on some objects, but not such as these. Father Paolo, a tall, solemn, dreary monk, with a voice suited to his frame, who looked now and then within our door, to inquire if all were well and satisfactory, was the only approachable being besides; and he would have been more ready to exorcise than to worship the airy creature that fluttered past him. The feelings with which the fathers regarded their noble resident were probably strange and various ; it was the first time their walls had ever sheltered such a one ; and they still talk of the visit, as a curious event in the history of their convent.

The apartment vouchsafed to me was as desolate as the most rigid penitent could desire : there were days when the sun was veiled, and the rain beat against the single casement ; and then the stone floor, mean flock bed, and cold empty passages without, were enough to sink the spirit. At night, on retiring to rest, the place was very lonely. The small lamp they gave me was made to burn as long as possible, and then the noiseless tread of the monks along the passage into which the door opened, or the low tones of some of the pilgrims passing to their cells, came on the ear. At times, too, the distant chant came through the long, silent avenues. It was not the voice of men wrestling with the world, or rejoicing over the sacrifice they had made of its seductions, but rather the tones of those wearied with the efforts heaven cost them day and night to gain.

I chanced, one evening, to meet in the convent with a volume of Lord Byron's works ; a singular relic in such a place. It was the volume containing the tale, formerly ascribed to him, of the Vampyre, that had then all the

interest of novelty. Restless and unable to sleep, after trimming my lamp, I opened with eagerness the wild story so utterly at variance with every feeling and association around me. It was a welcome relief at such an hour, and amidst such wretched accommodations, and came on the fancy, in that poor apartment, at midnight, with all the force of a spell. It needed not the picture of Ianthé to bid the spirit fly from this dreary place, where the forbidden form of woman would have been like that of an angel. But, contrasting the wild and withered vales around with the Athenian hills of perfume, and the forms of the Franciscans with that of the airy and lovely Moriote, it was no wonder that the lamp flickered and went out, and time fled unheeded, ere the tale had lost its charm.

I little thought, at the moment, that that tale would be the saving of my life, when senseless and nearly suffocated in the convent of St. John, by the monk putting a pan of fresh charcoal by my bedside. A few minutes more had been the last, but Michelle came just in time to avert so poor a doom. It was singular,

for he always before had fallen instantly into a sound sleep; but, to beguile the weariness of that evening's ride through the wilderness, I had told him the tale of the Vampyre, and it impressed him so deeply that he could not close his eyes all night: the wan, bloodless being, with its grey, marble eye, seemed to come into his cell, and he was alive to every murmur around.

One morning the superior sent to request to see us: it was a mere visit of dull civilities and heartless professions. He was attended by six or eight of the order. The interior of the building did not reveal any of the studied and tasteful luxury, such as we had seen in the divan of the great Armenian patriarch. The long and gloomy parlour was worthy of belonging to the old castle of a feudal chieftain: and the narrow, massive windows, wainscoted walls, and scanty number of chairs, on which the sun cast a dubious and cheerless light, were in character with the size and form of the apartment. Refreshments were brought by one of the friars; and we sat down on the dusty and half

cleaned seats, for the goddess of cleanliness had no worship here. Evil and rival passions were as rife within the walls as in the world without; for the situation of Superior was now vacant; the father who filled that dignity being lately dead, and it was not yet certain who was to succeed him.

Yet it was difficult to discover from what fountains of this world they could drink with joy or avidity. Each tender passion and feeling was withered: even the ties of relationship could have little force, for the monks had long ago quitted their native lands of Spain and Italy, to which they were never likely to return: and woman's voice and look of love would come as strangely here, as to the joyless Crusoe in his lone isle of Fernandez.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WILDERNESS.—PILGRIMS TO THE
HOLY LAND.

OUR second view of the wilderness, as it is called, was on a very sultry and cloudless day. The eminence that overlooked it was stony and barren, and the scene was sad and silent.

In wandering over the valley, the stranger often finds himself, amidst its jutting rocks and windings, shut out utterly from all human eye and sound. Above him rise the lofty and rocky precipices, thinly sprinkled with trees and foliage on one side, while on the other all is barren: the stream dashes along with a loud sound at his feet, and beyond is the blue sweep of the sea, spreading far as the eye can reach. And those who have travelled through this land have

often proved that there are few sounds or sights more welcome than these; and so were they felt of old. The prophecy, “that the desert shall rejoice, and become as a pool; and where dragons lay, shall be reeds and rushes,” conveys few ideas of beauty and luxury, save in a thirsty soil.

Even when one of the Judges of Israel gave his fair daughter Achsah as the prize of valour, her last request, when going to her victor husband, was for a blessing,—“give me also springs of water.” Perhaps the rarity of this luxury makes the rapid and solitary stream that rushes down this wilderness, doubly welcome.

The peaceful monks, the poor and indolent Christians, or the wilder Arabs, gave no disturbance to the stillness of the place; yet was it strange to see the turbaned, swarthy figures of the followers of the Prophet moving up and down, or even kneeling in earnest prayer on the rude soil, in bitter enmity to that Cross, whose coming and whose glory was here first proclaimed.

An Arab village stands on the opposite side

of the valley, just at the foot of the declivities. At this time, the place was frequented by a great number of pilgrims, who wandered up and down through every part, as their fancy or enthusiasm dictated. These men were of every nation in Europe: the long sticks, the humble garb, and the girdle, marked the natives of the West; while the robe or tunic, light turban, and darker complexion, distinguished those of the East. Hither they came, some of them with their wives, on this weary pilgrimage of months in duration; and pale, worn, and harassed, gazed around with an ardour, as if these scenes repaid them a thousand fold for all they had suffered.

And they were repaid:—call it an illusion; yet it was a splendid and a happy one; and hard must be the heart that would have taken it away. It was impossible to look unmoved on these men, of all characters and of all hearts; many of them, no doubt, stained with crimes of no common dye, yet all of them feeling, or fancying they felt, that the stern grasp of the world, which had hitherto dragged them cap-

tive, was loosening, and that its sweet but fatal voice was now dying on their ears. Some of them stood still, or sat on the side of the declivity, in which it is said the first herald of Christianity dwelt.

On the left are the remains of the house of Zacharias, and higher up the hill, that of the sepulchre of Elizabeth. The excited spirits of the pilgrims were well sustained in such a place. It was sweet to drink of the stream that ran through the valley, the same, probably, that had watered it in the days of our Saviour, for Nature knows little change in this land.

The demeanour of the pilgrims often differed not a little; the Asiatics, at least the Armenians and Syrians, looked more carelessly and indolently round; but the Italian and the Spaniard would sometimes gaze ardently and linger long: for faith, to men who travelled so far and perilously, with no other object and desire than to partake of the sanctity that hovers round these spots, was a real blessing. Many of them die here every year, in consequence of their fatigues and of the climate. Whatever property

they leave, (and some of them are very wealthy,) is instantly seized by the people around them, and they are buried without a friend to weep over their graves, or to tell, by the simplest inscription, who lies beneath. By the faltering steps and pallid looks of some, it was evident they would never more see their native land.

Even the Arab tenants of the opposite village would not have hesitated to assassinate a rich pilgrim, had they found him in some solitary nook or sequestered dell. This hamlet, as we drew nearer to it, was a strange contrast with every object around. Imagine a group of low, flat cottages, placed on the slanting face of the hill; the dark, turbaned inhabitants, with long, dirty white cloaks and sandals, and wild looks, gazing silently beside their coarse clay walls, as if they watched an opportunity to pounce upon the devotees, like one of the eagles on the summits above them, on the flocks that fed below. The women and children looked forth eagerly from their doors, as the former, even in this solitude, cared not to be seen more openly, at least without their veils.

This little hamlet of the Prophet's followers, in the very heart of this hallowed vale, was a curious spectacle. What to them was the stream, the grotto, even the stone on which the Baptist stood when he preached, and over which many a pilgrim still bends and weeps? All this must have seemed nearly as absurd in their eyes, as the veneration paid to the sacred stone of the Caaba at Mecca would appear to a Christian.

The interior of their dwellings was mean and wretched: the earthen floor and seats that ran round the walls, to serve as a rude divan; the fire-place in the middle of the apartment; the dirty and squalid looks of the inmates, testified that the place was a desert to them, however well it might fare with the devoted monks within the massive walls of the monastery at a few miles distance.

• Had this hamlet been a receptacle of lepers, it could not be more carefully shunned by the pilgrims than it was at present; had their wandering step crossed the threshold, it is doubtful if the cup of coffee and the pipe,

which we invariably found in the humblest dwelling, would have been extended to the parched lip: the scalloped shell, the tall staff, the sandals, and the girdle, would have been surveyed with contempt; and few of the gold mahmoudies or zequins, were such things shrouded beneath, would have gone forth into the wilderness again.

It has sometimes been amusing to observe the perfect difference of reception and welcome bestowed upon the various pilgrims of so many nations: the fathers have a lynx eye, or rather an intuitive perception, that seldom fails, respecting the wealth and station of the zealous wanderers, who come under their roof. It cannot be any splendour of garb or ornament, for the rich Armenian is habited as humbly and penitently as the poorest zealot. The choicest chambers, spread with fine and soft carpets, with divans all round the walls, are the portion of the men who have left goodly houses and possessions at home, to come and humble themselves in the dust, and to buy up with excessive zeal, precious relics, delightful mementos of

holier and now illustrious days. It is surprising with what fruitfulness and rapidity these things start up into life, or come forth from their ancient hiding-places, or are discovered only to the prayers or dreams of some brother more devoted than the rest. The gold flows rapidly, the wealthy pilgrim cares not to spare his pelf, but scatters it right and left with a generous hand. In the Armenian convent, the richest, the most worldly and luxurious of any in the city, the poor and dependent are disposed of beneath open sheds in the courts. But luxury is not spared to those whose riches have not availed to stifle the whispers of conscience. They are honoured with personal visits from the great patriarch; their tables are profusely supplied; and, save the habit of penitence and lowliness, small is the sacrifice that bids the past career of guilt press gently on the soul.

‘While we were in the city, a wealthy merchant was taken ill in this convent, and soon found himself approaching his last hour. It was a bitter thing, no doubt, to think that no relative or friend was near to close his eyes; no

wife or child to whisper sounds of consolation and love, and cheer his passage to a darker scene. He bore it with fortitude, however, and with the calmness, in which an Asiatic generally excels, in this trying moment, the native of a colder clime. His bedside was not forsaken: if sights and sounds of religion could avail any thing, the fathers seldom left him alone. It would have been cruel to leave so zealous and affluent a pilgrim to battle alone with his last enemy; the brethren of every rank and standing looked in his face with sympathy and kindness: at each moment the scrutinizing glance of their eye fell on the countenance of the dying merchant; then they turned their cowls aside, and spoke apart, and many a sigh and groan passed at intervals through the apartment. The man looked from his couch at times, as if he sought the hand or eye of a fairer comforter, whom he had known in the hours of health in his own land. His dying bed, with all this parade and profession, was in truth a stern and a desolate one; the cold figures of the fathers, their full eyes and faces, where love or heartfelt

friendship never dwelt; the very tone of their voices repelled the fluttering spirit, and bade it, in its helplessness, not cling to them for succour. At last, however, superstition whispered that they might open to him, perchance, the gates of immortality,—they could close gently, beautifully, kindly, the gates of this world on his soul. Some of his fellow pilgrims came to see him, but, save that they were embarked in the same cause, they were all strangers. The vials of consolation were in truth poured forth in every form—the shortness of the passage through the darkness of the world—the amazing efficacy of the pilgrimage he had undertaken, though it cost him his life; the hushed accent of the Superior, who was more chary of his promises and counsels; and then the sonorous, conspicuous nasal twang, peculiar to the Armenian fraternity, rung round his bed like the heavy din of battle on the ears of the dying soldier.

There could scarcely be a more just and striking comment on what poets have sung, and what every man has felt, in every land, that

there is no comforter like his own distant home, and the dear and kindred spirit that dwells there! "You have lived beneath my roof," said an exiled Syrian to me, amidst the wilds of Lebanon, while his eye sparkled with the memory of former pleasure; "in what state is my loved home now in, in which I lived so peacefully till the Turk drove me forth!" So felt the Georgian, no doubt, in his small Oriental chamber of luxury, with the most obsequious attention given to his slightest wish; symbols and relics, and saintly men, some of them no doubt sincere, striving to arm and prepare him for the last passage, from which, in the prime of life as he was, he would willingly have recoiled. The only one who showed true kindness of feeling, was the domestic of the merchant. He seldom quitted his bedside, paid scarcely any attention to priest, friar, or pilgrim, who entered the apartment, but seemed to be wholly wrapped up in the situation of his master. He was a thin, spare shadow of a man, with a pale, eager countenance.

They had come from some part of Georgia, where the merchant lived in considerable affluence, and had left there a wife and child, from whom he had parted with great reluctance, to undertake this, his first pilgrimage. Mingled with his concern for his master, there was no doubt a degree of selfishness. The thought of being left alone, and destitute, in the midst of the holy city, at such an immense distance from his home, was any thing but consoling; and he looked with the greatest hatred on the monks, who, in his eye, were no better than harpies about to pounce on their prey. He promised to go back instantly, as soon as his master should be no more, and tell his family and relations all about his fate, and how he died in the odour of sanctity, in the very walls of the holy city,—a promise that he subsequently found very difficult to fulfil!

Scarcely was the body cold, ere an inventory was taken of the merchant's worldly substance. It was not to be imagined that the sympathy, the sighs, the prayers, the relics, were all lavished upon credit, or out of pure beneficence.

They were to be paid for; and if report said true, the price was a liberal one, for the merchant's money could not be trifling. The lonely domestic weeping bitterly, followed the train of monks, that, sadly singing, bore his master's remains to the burying-ground without the gates. There, amidst the sepulchres of friars and pilgrims, he saw him interred, just on the slope of Mount Moriah, almost beneath the shadow of the lofty walls.

It is doubtful if the servant deemed the memorableness of the spot a sufficient compensation for the groves and rich plains of Georgia: the treeless declivity and stunted verdure, for the mountains and streams they had left behind. As he bent sadly over the place, the thoughts of his home no doubt came over him: he soon had additional cause for sorrow, for the exemplary inmates of the convent found the merchant's gold so pleasant to their touch, that they could not bear to part with the smallest portion to the desolate domestic. It was in vain that he begged to be paid the wages that were due to him, of which several

months were now in arrears; he said that he had not a friend in the land, or a piastre in his pocket to seek his way home, a journey of several months. The good fathers were amazed at the audacity of the man: to come upon the church's property with such a bold demand; to imagine that, after they had laid one pilgrim calmly and in sanctity in the hallowed soil, and been at great charges and care during his illness, they were now to send another pilgrim back in safety and comfort to his native home,—it was too much. He was thrust by the shoulders forth from the walls, without a hope to cheer, or a roof to cover him.

The evening was now fast drawing on: the scene had become more lonely; and the last rays of the sun had for some time sunk in the sea, that spread far in the distance. Every footstep but our own had departed; the desert of the Evangelist grew chill and gloomy, and we began at last, reluctantly, to retrace our path. A few miles to the right was another vale, or rather glen, of similar features, but far less extensive and bold, than that which we

had visited a few days before. It stood at the foot of the mountain, on whose summit was the ancient city of Tekoa, a noble site, that slopes by a short descent into a rich plain on the other side, while on this, high and naked precipices descend abruptly. The plain was covered with corn-fields, and afforded good pasture for flocks: in the rocks around are several excavations, made evidently by the hand of man, for storehouses or habitations of the wayfarer, or the shepherd; but no fragments of buildings remain. A church was built here many centuries ago, but shared the fate of every edifice of this kind: the monasteries have braved every effort of time, or of the Saracen, and in more than one instance, a thousand or fourteen hundred years have not mouldered their walls; but the churches have all disappeared. Several fragments of pillars still exist of that raised near Tekoa; less entire or picturesque than the shattered walls and arches of a similar edifice on the summit of Tabor, that are half shrouded in rich and deep foliage: here there is nothing but barrenness. The

glen far beneath, into which the heights descend, is, however, remarkably fruitful, and this fruitfulness was the more welcome, on account of the sterility that spread on every side—it was full of vines, fig-trees, and corn, and a clear rivulet ran amidst its fields.

Amidst these scenes of alternate sublimity and softness, the prophet Amos is said to have lived “among the herdsmen of Tekoa,” and tended the flocks of his master.

CHAPTER X.

DESOLATION OF PALESTINE.—VILLAGE OF
EMMAUS. — MASSACRE OF THE MAME-
LUKES.

ON our return from the capital to the sea-coast, we took a more open and circuitous route, which, though of greater extent, promised to embrace objects of higher interest. It was past mid-day when we set out, for the last time, from the walls; more than once pausing in the rocky path to linger over a scene that we were never more to behold, except with the eye of the mind. The sun rested fiercely on the massive walls and tower—the glittering mosque—the heavy churches, and mean, ruinous dwellings. These spoke no language to the heart; but the silent and sultry hills, and lone, wasted valleys, seemed to appeal to Heaven against the

obduracy of man, that had drawn down its withering hand on them.

The scanty grove on the brow of Olivet was unstirred by the faintest breeze: the grey and ancient rocks of the glens cast their shadows on the thin verdure at their feet, its only shelter: the beds of the narrow torrents were noiseless and dry, for no rain had lately fallen: no foot of the passenger or spoiler was heard around at this sultry hour. The monuments of kings, prophets, and martyrs, that stood thickly there, and the gloomy and open sepulchres with which the hill-sides were pierced, alone attested that amidst this stillness slept a doomed and mighty nation. On vale or hill no glory can ever come again: no excellency or loveliness spring out of their dried and burning soil: the demon, that sealed the fierce and fated spirit of the people, has spread his wing over the earth, and Nature has perished, while man was driven forth, with the curse of Cain on his heart.

But he is to come again and restore his fallen country! So say the believers in that fond delusion of the millennium of the land

of promise: the return of the Jews in sincere, eager, believing crowds, casting the pride of their ancient dispensation prostrate at the foot of the cross. The human spirit must not only be utterly changed, but the waters of Lethe drunk to the dregs ere this can be; ere the Israelite can plough the soil, and raise altars, and sing praises, and lead his children to Cavalry with tears of joy.

And will the land be one of more attraction then? In Palestine, there is not, and should not be, any medium between the summit of glory, and the wildness and sublimity of despair. Take away its desolation, and you take from it the chief charm: he whose steps have wandered there, will remember how dear was that sadness and loneliness; how awfully on the queen of the wilderness, sat her unchanged and eternal mourning.

The way, though barren, was very agreeable: in a few miles we passed into a more bold and hilly path, at whose side were many trees; but it was perfectly lonely; not a hut or tent within view for some hours, or a single passen-

ger. The evening was beautiful, and the stillness around unbroken by the shepherd's song. This was the way that led to the village of Emmaus, within view of which we soon after passed: it is a wild and romantic path, and finely suited to the deeply excited thoughts and converse that occupied the two disciples, as they walked there on that memorable day. The mean and trifling village, all that now exists of Emmaus, stands on an eminence, in the midst of hills. The people who live here are poor and wretched; they are chiefly Christians. So celebrated a spot could not fail to have a church erected in it: there are some ruined houses around, and grey, roofless walls, which prove the place to have been more considerable formerly. There is no cherished relic in the place, no venerated home or chamber of former sanctity. A priest resides here among his poor flock, to do the duties of the church; and at Easter these are not few or easy.

The pastor and his little flock gathered together in this mountain place, in so large a church as that of Emmaus, cannot offer a very

inspiring scene; and the genuine feelings of piety can alone render it a happy one. The despised and oppressed tenants of the solitary hamlet, in the midst of a bare and desolate scene, faintly lift ~~their~~ accents of praise within the grey and ~~ancient~~ walls: the stranger's eye kindles at the romance of the scene, and his thoughts conjure up a thousand brilliant associations. But if he looks closer, he will discover that the pressure of poverty and loneliness is too hard for enthusiasm: the pallid features, the dejected look, and the earnest attention to a few poor ceremonies, prove that the spirit is bowed, and its light and power utterly sunk. Was the same enlightened and devoted love of their faith cherished by these mountain Christians, as by those of the hills of Scotland, when they were driven to worship amidst rocks, glens, and solitary places, the stranger's steps would gladly linger there, rather than turn with pity from the degrading picture of human nature.

It was evening ere we passed over the large and fertile plain of Ramla: the lights from some scattered Arab tents were visible amidst the

gathering twilight; we soon after entered the town. Our reception this time was very different; we had not again to seek a night's lodging in the bazaar, for the surly Superior had received a severe rebuke for his conduct from the convent at Jerusalem. The next morning, the governor sent to request to see us. On entering his dwelling, which was handsomely furnished, we experienced a very kind reception. He ordered coffee, pipes, and refreshments, to be set before us; and we spent some time in his divan very agreeably. He was one of the finest young men we had ever seen; with the fair, fresh-coloured complexion, and beautiful features of a Georgian. This was accounted for, when he told us he had been one of the Mamelukes, at Cairo, during the time of their prosperity, before the celebrated massacre of the Beys, by Mahmoud Ali. He had been attached to the suite of the most powerful of those unfortunate chiefs, by whom he had been purchased when a boy, and brought up with all the kindness of a parent. Taken early from his native land, either by purchase

from his parents or the spoiler's hand, he retained little attachment to its soil.

He told the tale of the murder of his patron, and his own flight from Cairo, with much feeling. The formidable power of the Beys being entirely broken by the death of the three hundred chiefs, the Mamelukes instantly saw that Cairo was no longer a place for them; and rushing from the city, they gained the rocky hills of Upper Egypt; a distance of several days' journey. They were now reduced from a state of splendour and power to one of exile and destitution; and their feelings, he said, were very bitter, when they assembled on their rocky domain, the resources of which were soon likely to be cut off by the rapid approach of Ibrahim, the Pacha's son, with a large body of infantry. Had they been united, this haughty cavalry, many thousands in number, might still have presented a resistless attitude to the young prince. The latter, aware of the difficulty of compelling these fierce squadrons to surrender, as well as the risk of attacking them in their strong position, resolved to employ treachery

again. Despair or infatuation must have seized the minds of the unhappy Mamelukes; but, deprived of their chiefs, they seemed to have rushed blindly into the snare. Ibrahim, whose troops were drawn up in the plain, proposed to negotiate with them in the most amicable manner, and invited their leaders to an entertainment. Forgetful of the bloody and treacherous massacre that had so recently destroyed their long-established power in Egypt, the Mamelukes descended from their position into the plain, trusting to Ibrahim's promises. They were dressed with their wonted splendour, though somewhat faded by adversity; their rich arms glittering in the sun; the most imposing body of cavalry existing, though sadly diminished in number.

The young prince, who had well matured his cruel design, received them with smiles and courtesy; and while engaging their leaders in conversation on the proposed treaty of amnesty, ere they partook of the entertainment that was to seal their friendship, he caused his numerous troops, by degrees, to surround on every side the

unguarded Mamelukes, and then gave the signal to fall on them. The young Georgian described the scene of confusion and slaughter that ensued, accompanying his narrative with lively and graceful gestures; he saw his associates fall fast and thickly around him; the few remaining leaders were first singled out, and fell almost before they had time to draw the sabre. The confusion then became hopeless: the gallant and skilful cavalry, that had cost Desaix so much trouble, and cut his squadron of horse to pieces, were stricken down as mercilessly as their haughty Beys had been a few months before beneath Mahmoud's eye. Exposed to a ceaseless fire, and inclosed by overpowering numbers, they made but a faint defence: the Georgian, with a few of the most desperate, succeeded in opening his way through Ibrahim's infantry, and, without a wound, gained the open plain, while the work of slaughter still went on within the circle of infantry; and the cries and shrieks of those who still survived and fought on in despair, followed their flight, as

they fled to the mountains they had so rashly left.

Safe from the pursuit of the enemy's infantry, they checked their speed on gaining the rocky declivities, and turned to look back on the plain where their dominion had received its final blow. They saw the day sink on the scene of treachery, and Ibrahim's banners float over the promiscuous heaps that were now stretched there ; while the heads of the slain were cut off, and piled in pyramids around, to be sent as a sweet offering to his father.

The distresses which the poor fugitives underwent were very great : proscribed from all intercourse with the towns and villages under the Pacha's power, they were often exposed to the attacks of famine. The wild and rugged hills, that bound the deserts on each side, were their only place of safety ; and the caverns their resting-place. The soldiers of Ibrahim harassed them as far as lay in their power, but they were now too few and powerless to cause any uneasiness to the treacherous chief.

The greater part of the survivors bent their way to Dongala, where they were safe from pursuit; but the miseries they subsequently underwent deeply atoned for all the violences they might have committed in the days of their pride. They quarrelled at last, it appears by subsequent accounts, with some of the tribes among whom they had sought refuge; and in attempting to fly across the boundless deserts, in order to arrive at the northern coast, they were all murdered, except three or four miserable survivors, who were met with in the most abject plight. More fortunate than his associates, the young governor of Ramla refused to accompany their flight, and continued to wander about the wilds of Upper Egypt, changing his asylum from time to time.

Wearied at last with this kind of life, he resolved to endeavour to quit the country; and after many difficulties and dangers, succeeded in arriving on the coast. The world was all open to his adventurous spirit; and by his fine person and bearing, and skill in martial exercises, he seemed just the man to carve his way

onwards to fortune. He took passage for the coast of Syria, and bent his way to Damascus: the Pacha of this city was a mild and humane man, who cared little for the disputes of Mahmoud and the rival chiefs, and willingly received the adventurer into his service. In this new field, the latter soon began to distinguish himself; and though he might regret the more lawless and exciting career he had left behind, he served his new master with devotedness. In a country where interest, rank, and wealth, have less to do with a man's elevation than in any other part of the world, the exiled Mameluke rose, ere long, by his own merits, to an honourable situation. In the course of two years he was appointed Governor of Ramla, a higher rank than he had ever enjoyed in Egypt: it was at this time we saw him, and he appeared perfectly satisfied with his change of lot; though it was easy to see, by the earnestness with which he spoke of his Egyptian career, and by the flashing of his blue eye, that he would gladly be once more with his Mameluke associates. His post was a very easy and tranquil one; for the

town was unwall'd, and no enemy's foot ever came nigh.

When our interview was ended, he bade us a polite and friendly adieu, with offers of any services he could render us: the highest service had been the interesting interview with this gallant and adventurous young man. He quickly after mounted a splendid Arabian charger, and, attended by his officers, rode without the town to amuse himself with the game of throwing the jerrid. This was his daily morning pastime and exercise, and he excelled in it greatly, being an admirable horseman; and again and again his jerrid struck his flying officers, whom, conscious of his skill, he seemed to delight in baffling and annoying; some of the blows must have been rather severe. By turns they struck on the back, limbs, or turban, and the jerrids that were cast at the chief fell harmless, being mostly caught in the air, or evaded. Their galloping, wheeling, and various evolutions on the plain of Rama, offered a beautiful sight. The Georgian Chief had, in truth, no cause to

complain of the frowns of fate; it was very certain, that scarcely one of the formidable Mamelukes, or their long descended Beys, had ever met, after their ruin, with the same good fortune as himself.

E G Y P T.

CHAPTER XI.

THE APOSTATE.—CAMPAIGN IN SENNAAR.

THERE is not a city, perhaps, in the wide extent of the Ottoman empire, a residence in which combines so many memorable and interesting resources as Cairo. It has little of the brilliant scenery and endless gardens of Constantinople: the desert (a wild extent of sand, broken by red, rocky hills,) approaches its walls on one side. At every step through its streets, or around its walls, you meet with ruinous buildings, or the confused remains of the ancient city: the luxuries of the table also, the wines, the many delicacies of the city of the Sultan, are not found here; the man who might wish to revel in Oriental voluptuousness, should not fix on the “light of the Prophet’s eye” for his resting-place. The beauties of Armenia,

Circassia, and Greece, but scantily people its harems, and the ladies' market is often a barren and dreary spectacle.

But it is delightful to find oneself so near the vast remains of antiquity. In two hours' ride, you reach the pyramids; and the Nile is seen as far as the eye can follow it, from the flat terraced roofs of the city: then a few days' sail, every hour of which is full of the highest interest, lands the traveller amidst the ruins of many temples, which seem built for eternity, rather than for time. The concourse, too, of so many nations, differing from each in colour, language, and manners, is always striking; it is interesting also to see a *cafila* of slaves from Dongola arrive after a journey of two months through burning deserts; not of flat-faced and ugly negroes, but of young, well-formed Nubian and Berebber women, whose brilliant eyes and aquiline features look wasted and sunken, however, with their terrible journey. The long train of camels fill a whole street, as they proceed slowly and singly, each animal fastened by a cord to its follower, towards the

spacious market, or resting-place, where numerous apartments are assigned to the strangers. The stern and worn look of the Arab masters attest the trouble and care it has cost them to bring their charge in safety: walking by the side of their camels, they eye their burdens with a searching and calculating look, as if computing how much the scorching wind by day, and the parching thirst, had depreciated their value; and the wearied slaves gazing curiously around them, seem to hail with joy their arrival at last at their place of rest. It is true, many a weary land lies for ever between this and their own home; but it is singular with what gaiety, laughter, and recklessness, they bear their change of situation. This is far from being oppressive: an easy servitude, a kind and quiet home beneath the roof of some Turkish master, or perhaps a share in his affections and establishment, are not without attraction.

We were acquainted with a Turkish merchant, who had purchased one of these women. This man lived in a good house, the apartments of which were spread with handsome carpets,

and his table was well and plentifully served : the latticed windows, placed near the ceiling, let in every cool and refreshing breeze that blew ; and the nights, during the warm season, he generally passed on the terraced roof. In this dwelling, his Dongola beauty had servants to wait on her, rich dresses to invest her swarthy figure, and, what she prized most of all, a profusion of ornaments to adorn her ears, wrists, and ankles. With the true spirit of a woman, with whom the desire of being fine had conquered the love of home, of friends, parents, and all, she would shake her head, when asked if she longed to return to her wild home, where she roamed as free and almost as naked as the antelope of her deserts. At such times, her bright and cunning eye would glance on her bracelets and necklace, or on the apartment that was now her luxurious place of rest.

Instances like these are by no means rare : but Oriental slavery, and that of the West Indies, is widely different. It so happened that this Turk had another companion, a youthful Georgian, whom he treated with more honour

than the Nubian, and seemed to be in no small degree under her government; for he was past forty, and the lady was not more than twenty. Female dominion is seldom strongly felt in Turkey till youth and middle age, on the part of the man, begin to decline into the vale of years. The Mussulman is rarely conscious of the beauty of consistency as to age, companionship, and feeling; and is not of opinion that a wife who has grown elderly and faded and experienced by his side, is the best associate to continue with him to the end. On the contrary, when his wife declines, he looks for the youngest woman that money can purchase; and money can do every thing here. With exquisite bitterness of heart does the attached and faded wife see a haughty girl from Persia, or the Caucasus, introduced into the harem; the rule of which is, however, continued in her hands; and the Mussulman, the proudest of human beings, and one who, more than any other, looks down on the moral qualities of woman, yields himself, ere long, a willing captive to all the caprices and wayward tempers of a silly, insipid girl.

It was easy to perceive that our Turkish merchant, a fine-looking and high-spirited being, who had earned some of his wealth in daring enterprises, was entirely subjected to the chains of the Georgian. But fifteen years or less would probably be the extent of her reign, and then, her lord, stricken in years, and treble the age of his haughty mistress, even at seventy, would look around, direct his faltering steps at times to the market for white ladies, as it is called, and choose to himself a still more blooming mate.

If the concourse of the natives of the East often arrests the stranger's eye at the capital, the motley and various appearance of the Europeans is little less strange; adventurers from every land swarm here, and they are congregated together in what is called the Frank quarter. Some keep coffee-houses; others apply to different trades; a few are employed by the Pacha: but very many among them present a squalid and destitute appearance; men, who came to the country with sanguine and ill-founded hopes, which they soon find utterly

blasted. Germans, Spaniards, and Scotchmen, are seen lounging carelessly and recklessly in the sultry streets.

Among these characters there was an individual whose history presented a just and striking picture of the waywardness of the human heart: he was an American, the son of a wealthy merchant, a man of great shrewdness and talent, and scarcely thirty years of age. In his own country beyond the Atlantic, he had read Oriental travels, and dreamed of the wonders of the East, till his imagination was fired with a desire to explore them. There was another motive, more powerful than curiosity, namely, the wish to enjoy the pleasures and luxuries to be found there, which he pictured as exquisite; and to accomplish this, he was willing, as the event proved, to sacrifice every honourable feeling. He left his home and family, took passage for a port in France, and from thence sailed for Alexandria. Landed in the country, he justly thought, that, in order to realise his plans to the full, it was better to proceed instantly to the capital. He came to Cairo, and

looked with rapture at the glittering scenes and dresses, and perfect novelty of every thing around him. But woman was a sealed and hidden thing: he might wander for ever through the long and close streets, or around the ancient walls: the bright eyes he saw gleaming behind the latticed windows were not for him; and the gay tales of the story-tellers in the coffee-houses, only added fuel to his intense curiosity. He resolved, therefore, to embrace the turban, for this was necessary in order to further his plans. He made known his intention, and was willingly, though not warmly, received by the Moslems as a convert. The Mufti and his assistants came to his apartment; the various ceremonies were afterwards gone through, and the self-deluded American found himself a believer in the Prophet in the midst of Cairo. There was a deep and proud pleasure for many days in, walking through the streets, visiting the bazaars and houses of resort in his new and splendid dress; or in sitting for hours in the coffee-houses, or beneath the large spreading trees on the banks of the Nile, amidst a circle

of Orientals, smoking his pipe, sipping coffee, and imitating the calm and dignified manners of his new associates. This excitement of feeling was, however, not all sensual ; as a man of talent and education, he could not but gaze, with the deepest interest, on the Nile rolling slowly at his feet, and the noble vestiges of former days ever present to his eye : he was now a denizen of the land.

Thus was conscience lulled asleep, and it was long ere it woke, like a spectre, and would not depart. There were many novelties too, many agreeable things attendant on this change of faith ; he was invited by some of the Turks to their houses, and as he was already able to converse, in some degree, in the Arabic language, which he afterwards acquired rapidly, they were highly pleased with his various and instructive conversation. There were parties into the vicinity also, to the other side of the Nile, where the day was passed in indolent enjoyment, and they did not return to the city till night had set in.

But his money began to fail, a circumstance that soon put a stop to this pleasant and

thoughtless career. Before leaving America, he had devoted his attention, with some success, to military studies, and he now offered his services to the Pacha, who appointed him an officer of engineers, for which post he was said to be well qualified. It was probable that he expected the Turks would do something highly beneficial for him, and use their efforts to procure for the new convert an advantageous situation, or dispense a few of their good things to him in some way or other. But he was egregiously mistaken; not an Osmanli offered him a para; they had no objection to see the turban on his head; but as to advancing or enriching him, with any trouble or cost to themselves, their zeal for the Prophet did not carry them so far. Had he been in absolute poverty, there is no doubt but this kind-hearted people would have relieved him as liberally as one of their own nation, and supplied his wants for a time, with as much good-will as they now offered their silk tobacco pouches and enamelled pipes in the coffee-houses.

Unfortunately for his enjoyments, the expe-

dition to Sennaar soon after set out, and he was ordered to join the army destined for the conquest of that country, under Ismael, the eldest son of the Pacha. This force marched slowly over the vast extent of country that intervened, along the shores of the river, or was more often embarked in numerous boats on the Nile. We saw, on our return from Upper Egypt, a division on its way to join this army : it was encamped on a flat plain, close to the water's edge, its white and green tents pitched amidst the palm-trees, and the troops carelessly seated in groups at the tent doors, or lounging carelessly along the banks. It was a beautiful sight ; the evening sun darted its brilliant and level rays through the palm groves, on the glittering arms and various dresses. Close to the water were several groups engaged in their evening devotions, kneeling side by side, their attitude and looks presenting a singular contrast to their martial array. The solemnity of this scene was rendered more striking by the utter solitude that spread around the wide desert plain, and by the naked masses of rock that rose be-

yond the silent wastes of sand that spread on the opposite side of the river. Had the shouts, the sports, and the gaiety of a European army, on the same spot, amused the eye and ear, the effect would have been entirely different : but this silent army, as it might be called, the low hum of voices, the stifled sounds of sincere and deep devotion, the uplifted eyes, and the lovely day that was now closing on all, rendered the scene most impressive.

Why does every religious exercise assume so sublime an appearance in the wilderness and the solitary places ? seldom is the mind so impressed with the sense of invisible things in a spacious, populous, or splendid place of worship, where there are the sounds of music, and all the aids of eloquence, as in wild spots, where the Osmani kneels alone, or with his companions beside him. Often were we struck with this humble but memorable sight ; and well did the prophet of Mecca know human nature and his countrymen, when he commanded them, in all their wanderings, never to omit their

stated devotions, however remote or dreary the place might be.

Often, when traversing the wastes round Sinai and Paran, did the idea of the ancient Israelites come before our minds, as they stood at their tent doors, and listened to the words of the Highest, amidst the deep silence and stern scenery of those eternal deserts; or, when marching through the wild glens or sandy oceans, each tribe marshalled apart, and each eye of the countless multitude fixed on the pillar of fire, in which was their Almighty protector and friend. St. Augustine might, with more taste, have made either of these sights one of his three wishes, than that of Paul preaching at Athens, or Solomon dedicating the temple.

To return to the expedition to Sennaar.—After a long and persevering march of some months, the army of Ismael entered on its career of conquest and spoil—of battle it could hardly be called, for the wild natives, though they fought desperately, could offer no formidable defence against their invaders. The re-

negade, ere he arrived at Sennaar, had enjoyed the highest pleasure in exploring the course of the Nile, far beyond the cataracts. Few travellers had ever had the facilities of ascending the river to such a distance; and as he was attached to the division that proceeded in barks the greater part of the way, he watched, with intense curiosity, the course and windings of the stream, the remote ruins that were still found at long intervals, and the various tribes of natives among whom the course of the Egyptian army was that of the pestilence. When the troops entered on active operations, the scene was altered; the slow and measured progress up the stream was exchanged for the painful advance through burning deserts. In several engagements that took place, the skill of the artillerist was called into action, and drew forth the praises of Ismael, who had succeeded in bringing several field-pieces in boats up the river. But the former soon saw it was a service in which little glory, or plunder, or promotion, was to be gained. The ears of the slain barbarians were shipped and sent down to

Cairo, to the number of thousands, as presents to his father, accompanied with news of his victories. But in these far and interminable deserts, the American found he was a lonely and neglected man; his constitution began to sink beneath the severe heats and the active duties of his situation. The fierce and iron sky was without a cloud; a want of water several times prevailed in the camp; and even the Turks and Albanians began to drop 'round him; the latter troops, unable to withstand the heats, died 'fast. His eyes became dreadfully inflamed by the constant glare of the sun; but as he was the only officer who understood the management of the guns, his services were constantly in requisition, and no respite was allowed him. Great strength of constitution alone could have enabled him to support this harassing service in such a climate. Every charm of Orientalism had now taken flight; no sensual or imaginary pleasure dwelt within the precincts of Ismael's camp; the same hot air and parched soil awaited him every day, and

at night he returned, wearied and dejected, to his tent.

It was then that he looked back to his native home and country with the deepest regret : that home must have been one of kindness and affluence, for he was an only son, and his father was a wealthy merchant. He had one companion in misfortune ; a comforter he could hardly be called. This was a renegade Scotchman, who often afterwards came to me for charity at Cairo. He had joined the army of Ismael as a common soldier, and bore the fatigues and privations of the campaign with unflinching strength ; for he was a tall, raw-boned, and powerful man. These two men continually associated together, during the intervals of service, for they were alike disappointed and unhappy ; and being the only Europeans in the camp, it was a heartfelt pleasure to converse together in their tent at evening, on their past feelings and future hopes. Here they cursed deeply and mutually the true believers who were around them, for the veil began to fall

from their eyes, and the stern pressure of present suffering softened and broke the hardness of their hearts. In reproach and execration of the faith he had adopted, the Scotchman, however, exceeded, for he was an ignorant and wicked man. Wilson, on the other hand, could not so soon shake off the predilections he had long cherished, and, through every adverse circumstance, he still clung to the turban, and the hope of future eminence.

But this could not last: his spirit and his health sunk fast, and every day saw the force advancing farther into the interior of Sennaar, for Ismael was flushed with his rapid conquests. Often at night, amid the pauses of his broken sleep, the apostate heard the wild cries in the distance, of the chased and despairing natives; and in the frequent battles fought with the latter, he saw with a pang, of which his seared heart was yet capable, the fearful slaughter made by his artillery among their helpless and crowded ranks. He could bear it no longer, and resolved, with the Scotchman, to fly from

the camp in the middle of the night, and endeavour to reach Egypt, through the interminable deserts ~~that~~ intervened. He had often applied to the young commander for his pay, which was now six months in arrears; they had long fared miserably, and saw no alternative but of entering on their flight with the small sum of money possessed by the American, which might amount to about fifty piastres, for Ismael refused to advance him a para for his services, till the campaign was finished. In the middle of the night, mounting two camels, they left the camp without being observed, and striking into the depth of the deserts, travelled till morning, and the greater part of the following day, with scarcely a pause to rest themselves. There was little danger, however, of their being pursued; desertions were not rare from this adventurous army, and the troops were too much engaged with their operations, to think of pursuing two individuals into a boundless waste.

The fugitives endured incredible hardships; a draught of water and a handful of flour

was often their daily sustenance, and the sand their only bed by night; but the thoughts of reaching Cairo once more made them bear every thing with fortitude and cheerfulness. At last, after a journey of many weeks, to their inexpressible joy, they came to the rich banks of the Nile; and taking boat, in a few days saw the favourite city of the Prophet just before them. It seemed, to Wilson, after he had been a tenant of the deserts so long, a perfect paradise: his eye revelled on the spectacle of crowded streets, shaded and luxurious dwellings, and cool bazaars: all the charms of social life and feelings seemed to return with full flow on his heart; and if heaven, in its wrath, had given him the cup of bitterness to drink, this moment seemed to repay him for all. He would sit in the coffee-houses the whole day long, scarcely knowing how to enjoy sufficiently the delicious indolence.

He had a few acquaintance among the Europeans resident in the place, and from one of these he procured a small supply of money. Seeing that no notice was taken of his appear-

ance in the city, he resolved to present himself before Mahmoud Ali, who received him civilly enough, and took no notice of his flight from the camp, which Wilson declared that his utter inability to support the burning heats alone compelled him to take. The Pacha, however, absolutely refused to pay a single para of his six months arrears of pay, as he had left the army without orders; but knowing the talents of his officer, he appointed him to a civil situation in one of the government departments, with a salary of thirty pounds a year, equivalent to about a hundred in England. He soon after received a remittance from America, and, his hopes and passions once more awakened and gratified, he again began to realise the luxuries of Islamism. To prove his attachment to it, and, at the same time, give a proof of his abilities, he wrote with great care and ingenuity, an exposition of the Koran, in order to set forth its beauties more luminously, and render it more acceptable and delightful to the European taste. The manuscript was placed in the hands of the English consul, during my residence there; he could

not help admiring it; and the apostate felt a vivid pride and satisfaction in this proof of his versatile talents, as well as in thus evincing to the world that his was not a weak and wavering spirit.

It was at this time I one day visited him in his apartment, in the offices of the Pacha, where he was employed writing and transcribing the greater part of the day: there was evidently a struggle to conceal the poorness of the situation and its appurtenances; it certainly was unworthy of his mind and ambition. The apartment was very plain and meanly furnished; no court or adulation could ever be offered up within its walls; a clerk, and that of a very middling grade, could never attract the notice or the stop of the turbaned people who daily passed his door in their way to the chamber of the higher officers. He had hoped, and with some reason, that his exposition of the book of the Prophet would draw down some promotion on his head; but this hope was not accomplished, whether it was that the Turks suspected his sincerity, or cared little for the comments

of a renegade Giaour on their Holy Book. The most cogent reason was perhaps, that the Pacha was a freethinker, and valued no man's religious opinions as straw: as long as they served him well, they might be Guebres, or worshippers of the grand Lama.

The celebrated traveller Burckhardt, with whom Mahmoud was very fond of conversing, presented himself before him one day. "Pacha," he said, "I want to go and see the Holy City, and pray at the Prophet's tomb: give me your leave and firman for the journey."

"You go to Mecca, and our blessed Prophet's tomb!" said the prince, "that's impossible, Ibrahim," (the name by which he went in the East,) "you are not qualified; you know what I mean; nor do I think you are a true believer."

"But I am, Pacha," was the reply. "You are mistaken, I assure you: I am qualified too, in every respect; and as to belief, have no fears about that; tell me any part of the Koran that I will not believe?"

"Go to the Holy City, go, Ibrahim," said the Pacha, laughing heartily; "I was not aware

you were so holy a man. Do you think I'll vex myself with questions from the Koran? go and see the Prophet's tomb, and may it enlighten your eyes and comfort your heart."

Wilson could not then have put forth his treatise under the eyes of a less grateful prince. He displayed an intimate knowledge of Oriental customs, habits, and feelings, on which he dwelt with vivacity, as well as eulogy. His appearance still bore the marks of the painful and sultry expedition to Sennaar, for all his sufferings in which, he said, he was not likely to receive a single para. It was January, and early in the morning, a small pot of charcoal was burning, even in Cairo, on the floor, that was partly covered by a coarse carpet. But the time of trial was now drawing near: month wore away after month, and no brighter prospect dawned on the American; hope deferred, it is said, makes the heart sick: defeated ambition, perhaps, makes it wretched, and poverty lays it utterly prostrate. So the proud renegade felt at last; and beneath the united pressure of these emotions, felt the hardness of his

spirit give way, and his Oriental visions melt like thin frost-work before an Egyptian sun.

What could he do? to what side could he turn? the Pacha refused to promote, or to notice him any further: the remittance he had received from home was all expended: he had not told his family the fearful tale of his apostasy, and he dared not tell them: the Europeans, most of them, looked cold on him. He had his salary, it is true, and it was sufficient for a decent support. But it was not for this he came to the East; it was not for a mere maintenance he left his own land, where affluence was habitual to him: it was to revel in a more glowing and luxurious state of existence; it was to realize the bright and burning dreams of the senses and the fancy—these had all fled with the morning that now broke drearily on his view. They were never more than scantily, imperfectly enjoyed; and now that money, valued and prized by the Arab, the Turk, and the Syrian, more, if possible, than by the Englishman, was gone—he might turn with anguish, like the prodigal son,

from the land he had sought, now changed to barrenness, and say, "Would that the good things of my father's house were now before me!"

In fine, he wished to become a Christian again! the struggle in his heart must have been dreadful before he could bring it to this avowal; but he did avow it, and that before the very face of those Christians to whom, but a few months before, he had exultingly presented his exposition of the Koran. He confessed that he repented of what he had done; that he wished the turban dashed from his brow, and the habiliments of his new faith given to the flames: that he longed to return to the bosom of that religion which he had denied, and acknowledge the Redeemer, whose cross he had publicly trampled on. This avowal created great and general surprise; for he had not lightly bowed to the crescent: his apostacy had not been the result of weakness, of interest, or of fear—the motives which have, in most instances, moved the spirits of renegades: his had been fulfilled in willing and deliberate

obedience to the temptation of the senses, and had been thus far ably, daringly supported.

There was a missionary at this time resident in Cairo, whose labours for the conversion of the Jews have given him a just celebrity ; he caught at these new-born emotions of Wilson with rapture ; took the New Testament daily to his apartment ; read to him, wept over him, and strove to confirm and strengthen his resolution. The apostate wept bitterly ! the missionary saw in his tears the true signs of a convinced and penitent spirit. I did not think so. I perceived in them only the bitterness of blasted hope, and the deep sense of humiliation, in a proud spirit, wrung to the very core. There may have been, and no doubt there was, a sense of remorse mingled with his feelings. Conscience could not be silent in such an hour : she could not but bring before him purer and happier days, when, with his attached family, he worshipped the God, of his fathers—when the father, the mother, and the only son, placed their hope and trust in the same Lord and Redeemer :—and now the tur-

ban was on his brow ! To the heaven which they hoped for, he could not come ! for his paradise, that of the Prophet, was to them as accursed as the regions of the lost.

Yet with all these strong and contending emotions, had the Pacha at that moment appeared at the door of the chamber of confession, and bade his attendants clothe and arm his officer richly, as one whom “ he delighted to honour ” and promote, the book of hope and promise he held in his hand would have been closed for ever, or dashed contemptuously on the ground ; and again Orientalism had been clasped to his soul.

However, it was impossible to see a young, high-spirited, and talented man a prey to these distressing and penitent feelings, without feeling a sympathy in his situation ; and this sympathy was not inactive. The Consul interested himself in his favour ; it would have been instant destruction to the apostate, had the Turks had any suspicion or knowledge of all this : the inevitable fate of the renegade who

is discovered in the attempt to return to his former faith, is instant decapitation. Therefore it was necessary to keep it a profound secret. Wilson was impatient to depart; and grew anxious, as he well might do, at his critical situation: his expressions were full of compunction and sincerity: the glowing pictures he had formerly drawn of Eastern enjoyments, and he could talk eloquently, were now exchanged for prospects of peace and hope, and a virtuous life, which he was resolved to lead as soon as he had once more **made** public profession of Christianity. The Missionary listened, with the simplicity of a child, to each expression that fell from the apostate's lips: in his eyes, it was a glorious triumph over error and delusion. But the triumph, it is to be feared, is not yet completed; and this singular man yet lingers in the regions of the East, in ~~a~~ part where his apostacy and return are not known. Distracted between two warring systems and faiths; unable to shake off the glowing remembrance and sense of what he once enjoyed and still loves of

Orientalism ; unable, on the other hand, to lull an accusing conscience to rest, his state resembles that of the " first great apostate," who gazed with desire on the joys of the first tenants of Eden, yet felt the deep consciousness of a higher destiny, mingled with the bitter memory of past virtue.

With no small difficulty, and strict secrecy, measures were taken by the English Consul, with great kindness and generosity, for the escape of the penitent : it was necessary to manage matters with adroitness, as it was certain that his absence would soon be known. In the middle of a dark night, he was conveyed from the city, having clothed himself in a European dress, and doffing his Oriental garments with far greater zest than when he had first put them on. Having reached the banks of the Nile, he stepped on board a bark that waited, and sailed instantly for Alexandria, where he arrived in safety. He quickly afterwards set sail for a European land, and there, in a short time after his arrival, abjured his Turkish

faith in one of the churches, and embraced Christianity again. The turban was forsaken, and the anguished spirit was calmed; but the veil still covered it, and shrouded its strong delusions. A few months after, he returned again to the East.

CHAPTER XII.

CAPTIVE BEDOUINS.—WANDERINGS OF THE ISRAELITES.

A LESS kind fate than that of the apostate befel another character, of less acquirements, but, probably, of a better heart, whom we had too well known. About two years after our departure, there appeared at Cairo, with a worse grace than when he moved along his native desert, Hassan, the chief of the Bedouins, who had held us captive in his desolate valley.* He was now brought in a prisoner, with several other Sheichs. They had, with their forces, attacked a caravan coming from Mocha to Cairo, and plundered it; and to revenge this violence, a body of troops had been sent against them by the Pacha. The caravan was rich, and very

* See "Letters from the East," Second Edition, vol. i. p. 230.

numerous, loaded with coffee and spices, and other articles, and composed of a large number of merchants and attendants. The Bedouins had obtained intelligence of the probable time of its passage, and Hassan leagued with some other chiefs to attack it on the way, for which end they resolved to combine their forces. It was not difficult to do this, in a country filled with rocks and ravines, and with so good a look-out as these men generally keep. Eager to seize every opportunity of plunder, the positions in which they lived were yet so remote from the track of the few caravans that came, that they seldom met with a good chance of obtaining any thing valuable. The present caravan offered a rich booty, of which they had obtained accurate intelligence, by communication, probably, with some of the Arabs of other tribes, who acted as guides; and as spoil is the element of a Bedouin's life, they waited the moment with great anxiety and high-raised hopes.

It was not anticipated that much resistance would be made, as the caravan, it was known,

was travelling with a weak guard, and the numerous attendants and guides, as well as their masters, were more likely to fly than to fight. As the assailants themselves, however, were by no means too brave, every precaution had been taken to ensure success, and make numbers answer the purpose of bravery. By day and night had the camel of the chief scoured the desert, to bear his master to the dwelling-places of other Sheichs, in order to arrange and mature the plan of this important event. It might be said of them, that they scented the plunder afar off, and a detail of the various rich and tempting articles of the large caravan was scarcely necessary to induce them ardently to engage in the enterprise. Well and energetically could Hassan speak whenever he had any interest to answer by so doing; his deep voice, his keen and searching black eye, and the graceful waving of his hand, all marked, to a certain degree, the orator. His own tribe was far too small, as to numbers, to ensure success; though, had it been possible, he

would much rather have done without associates, who would, of course, come in for an equal share of the spoil.

A strong muster was made of these rapacious fellows, which included all the rogues and thieves in Hassan's camp, who were not a few, and it included also all the spare forces from two or three friendly camps in the same region, though at some distance. They left their own neighbourhood without delay, and passed, after several days' march, to the other side of the Red Sea, their own dwellings being beyond the region of Tor. This circuitous route, in which they passed near Sucz, brought them into the very track which the caravan was obliged to make in proceeding from Mocha. They took up their position at some distance among high and rocky hills, which effectually screened them from the eye of any passenger; and here they waited, with true Arab patience and avidity, for the arrival of the object of their pursuit. An incessant and keen look-out was kept up from the highest rocks, and at last the caravan was seen at a distance slowly ad-

vancing over the desert, with several long trains of camels, the greater part heavily laden, and with very little precaution in their progress. The trains of animals marched with little order, almost at the discretion of their guides, and were scattered over the sand; and the merchants, mounted on camels or dromedaries, were riding in groups, or keeping beside their individual effects, all unsuspecting of an enemy. In fact, it was many years since any danger had occurred in that part of the route, as it was well known no spoilers dwelt there, while its being so near the seat of Mahmoud's government was sufficient of itself to remove all fear.

As soon as the advance of the caravan near the post of the Bedouins offered a favourable place for attack, the latter rushed out so suddenly and unexpectedly, that their onset produced all the effect they desired. The greater part of the people took to flight, and a very considerable portion of the effects fell into the hands of the assailants. To men whose daily luxuries were bounded by dry coarse cakes and

coffee, the valuable articles thus thrown into their hands must have presented a rich and rare prize. As spoil was their sole object, they offered no injury or violence to any of the people ; the few merchants who, more tenacious than the rest, remained with their goods, and put up vain petitions to have them spared, at least, a part of them, were answered with threats and laughter. A great deal was plundered and scattered about on the spot—bales of coffee torn open, and bags of spices, and other more tempting effects, which the eagerness and curiosity of the assailants would not allow time to examine in a more leisurely way. The people of the caravan fled over the desert in various directions, as fast as their legs, or those of the animals they rode, could carry them. Anastasius has described the feelings of bitterness and rage that cannot but be the portion of those who behold the gains of years suddenly taken from them in the wilderness ; some, perhaps, had embarked their whole fortune in the venture, and had been anticipating the high profits they should make in the city they were ap-

proaching, and were now almost within reach of; and yet poverty and despair again came to blast their path, and spread their shadow over every step they took.

The wealthier merchants, cursed and tore their beards at seeing the ravage that was pitilessly made of their costly stuffs. The most eloquent description could not out-do the real scene that was now acted by the successful chief, and the mingled feelings of those he despoiled. A great quantity of the merchandise was borne off by the Bedouins to their homes; to which they repaired with all the speed they could exert. And they had reason to do so, having again to pass close to Suez, and across the high road, where other caravans, and, perhaps, detached bodies of troops, might be met with, and prove less easy of conquest. By marching rapidly, however, both night and day, though incumbered with their booty, they arrived in safety at their desert and almost inaccessible camps. Here was spoil for Hassan and his two wives, for his share could not be small. How the eyes of the latter must have

sparkled with unutterable pleasure at sight of the shawls and rich stuffs spread out before them ! for their usual dress consisted only of the coarse white cotton garments worn in common by the whole tribe ; the short tunic, with the neck open, and a hood, in the shape somewhat of a monk's cowl, thrown over the head. The turban was a luxury they never knew ; but among the productions, some of which came from India, by way of the Red Sea, to Mocha, there were several articles whose texture and dazzling colours would have caught the eye even in the streets of the capital, but much more in these remote solitudes.

The spoil was enough, in fact, to have outlasted Hassan's day, and those who came after him ; but dearly did the chief abide this enterprise. The greater part of the fugitives, as well as what remained of the merchandise, found their way to Cairo, and made their complaint to the Pacha, who, deeply incensed at such an outrage, as he termed it, in his dominions, sent out a body of troops against the offenders. He would not perhaps have been so

speedy and decisive in his measures, had he not been, in some degree, a personal sufferer by the enterprise. The duties, which would have been high on the entrance of so large a caravan into the city, were all lost; and as he piques himself on the safety and tranquillity preserved by his own despotism, throughout his empire, he was determined to punish so daring a violation of them. The troops sent out arrived, after many days' march, at the deserts where the spoilers dwelt, and attacked them with vigour. The Bedouins defended themselves stoutly: they had every advantage of position and knowledge of the country; but they had scarcely expected their enterprise would have been so speedily revenged, and by some of the Pacha's best troops. The Turkish soldiers, though at first baffled, persisted in their attacks; and, in an action that took place in the very defile we had formerly passed, Hassan, in company with several other Sheichs, was taken prisoner. They were brought as captives into Cairo; and as they passed through the streets, Michelle, who was then in Egypt, as an attendant on Captain

C——, saw Hassan, and kindly saluting him, inquired the cause of his present captivity. The latter recognised one of his old prisoners and acquaintance, more by gestures than words, for he said little ; and giving him a sad and melancholy look, passed on in the train of his companions.

They were mounted on camels, closely guarded by the Turkish cavalry, and looked very harassed and care-worn. As the sight of criminals, whether from the desert or the town, is no unfrequent event in the capital, the procession excited little interest or sympathy from the populace. After a few days' confinement, they were condemned to have their heads struck off. Although the sentence was rather severe, they could scarcely have expected one more lenient, considering the nature of their offence. Yet was it a stern and bitter reverse to these free and wild tenants of the wilderness, to pine within the close walls of a prison, and wait every instant for their doom. Michelle made some efforts to see and converse again with the chief: they were not successful ; but he under-

stood that he bore the situation with little fortitude, though at the last moment he behaved with the dignity and courage of an Arab chief. But in the gloom and restriction of his prison, his spirit sunk : the thoughts of his desert, no doubt, came vividly before him : how could it be otherwise ? for he was there the sole and unfettered master : his tribe was strongly and devotedly attached to him, and with them his will was law. When he rose in the morning from his couch of sand, he felt that his every movement was free as air, and that his followers only waited his word and caprice to turn their camels to any part of the boundless desert ; to seek a kindlier place of abode, or watch the track of the traveller or merchant. But here, no eye was turned on him in kindness, and the words of his Turkish guards were brief and contemptuous ; for these men hold the Bedouins in perfect scorn : the sun, too, so dear to an Arab's eye, never found its way within his close and stifling prison that was soon to be exchanged for the scaffold.

His companions, who were the same Sheichs

who had debated about our being set free from the valley, had superior powers and possessions; but were hard, brutal men, of a different calibre, both of character and feeling, from the poor, but kind-hearted and noble-looking Hassan, who wept bitterly at his inevitable fate. His two wives, Amra and Mirrha, must now be left desolate: to the latter he seemed to be much attached, on account, perhaps, of her extreme youth, and her being the mother of his infant child. The poor chief often took the latter in his arms, and gazed on it with great fondness; and he never forgave us the not being able to cure a complaint that attacked it; we were well aware, that if our want of skill had occasioned any mishap, we must have dearly abided it. He well knew that his scanty tribe, like that of a feudal chieftain, would be scattered and destroyed at his death: a few of his best followers had been taken, and were about to die with him, and the remainder would be obliged to wander forth from their savage glen, and join themselves to some more powerful tribe, in which their own name would

soon be blended and forgotten. As their whole number scarcely counted twenty tents, it was impossible they could maintain themselves independently, when both “ their strength and wisdom were taken from them;” and so high and deep-rooted is the pride of descent of these people, that it is doubtful whether the ruin of his tribe, or the loss of those he loved, gave most sorrow to the chief.

Yet the latter, no doubt, was most full of agony, as death drew nigh. The going forth of his youthful wife and child, surrounded by a few weak and sorrowing followers, and bending their way hopelessly over the desert, was a picture that perhaps came often and miserably before him. How different from his present bearing was the haughty tone and attitude of defiance that he displayed, while we were compelled to be his companions. He cared not for the Pacha or his power; and now he would have kissed the dust of his feet for the faintest promise of life; but the Pacha was resolved on their destruction; for it was not the first time he had been annoyed by their deeds of violence,

and the capture of the English travellers might now perhaps be remembered against them.

At the end of a few weeks, these Arabs of the desert were led out to die ;* and however they might have shrunk from confinement and insult, they seemed resolved to face their last hour bravely. Hassan, whose face and figure were wasted with grief and hard treatment, looked on the preparations for death with a calm and proud air. The soldier, with his keen scimitar bared, the Turkish guards around, and the spectators that were gathered, caused no dismay in the Bedouin ; yet it was not here, perhaps, he would have wished to meet the angel of fate. Like a native of the land of the North, when brought to a similar situation, he might have said, “ Let me die on my native hills or wilds, and not amidst walled towns.”

When all was ready, the condemned Arabs knelt down, and the head of each was struck off at a single blow ; and it was left for his desolate wives to raise the death-wail in the solitary glen, for the loss of the chief. How fearfully, amidst the savage solitudes of that place,

must the shriek of sorrow and despair have risen ! They had not even the mournful satisfaction of following him, after the fashion of their tribe, to the wild cemetery in the sand, and covering his head, each with their own hand, in peace and reverence.

We had suffered much at his hands ; but it was not possible to hear of his fate without regret. To us, his valley in the desert, that was his loved and longed-for home, seemed little else than a living death. The night appeared there to be the most welcome time, as it relieved us from the excessive gleam of the sun, that was never shaded by a single cloud ; the dry and soft soil then felt cool to the foot, and it was pleasant to walk abroad, and enjoy the perfect silence of the hour. Our lawless companions had, by this time, sunk to rest, and not a voice came from any of the tents. The starlight, resting on the glen, was sufficiently brilliant ; and the outline of the high and rugged mountains was thrown boldly and beautifully forth. The freshness of the hour, at times, induced us to linger long, ere we sought repose.

In the sides of the precipices, **more** than one deep and narrow ravine was seen, shaded by overhanging rocks, and wrapped in perpetual gloom. The sound of a rivulet, dashing wildly down, would have been luxury to the ear, for the sensation of thirst was felt by night as well as day; and we could not help recollecting the description Bruce gives of his feelings, when he pressed his face to the sands at the close of day, and, listening intensely, heard, amidst the stillness, the distant murmur of the Nile.

Although the harsh features of the glen were softened by the brilliant light, yet it was very waste and dismal. Amidst such scenes the ancient Israelites, so easily led astray, began to worship (after the fashion of the people among whom they sojourned) the heavenly bodies that spread so beautifully above them. On earth, all was desolation to their eye; wherever it turned, rocks, frightful sands, and a burning sterility alone appeared. But in the vast canopy above, there was infinite loveliness, undimmed by a cloud; and lingering even to the rise of day. On their weary marches by night,

or amidst the stillness of their encampments, the hosts of Israel, no doubt, often gazed with desire and admiration ~~on~~ the silent and beautiful world above them; and these feelings, amidst a seductive example, might easily pass into veneration and worship. Often, lying awake on his couch of sand, the traveller beguiles the hour in watching the splendid sky, as one star after another breaks forth in glory, and wishes that the hot and glaring day may never again come on his path.

It was amidst these frightful solitudes, we could not help often observing, that the Israelites dwelt for forty years. Certainly we are too prone, from long habit, to censure this ill-fated people for obstinacy, rebellion, and complaining, such as no other nation would have been guilty of in like circumstances. There should seem to be injustice as well as error in the sweeping censure cast on these wanderers; and the traveller, who follows and examines their track, can hardly help thinking that the greater part of mankind, in the same situation, would have exhibited a similar conduct. Since

the world was created, there never were residences so fearful and wearying, as those in which the Hebrews were doomed to dwell month after month, and year after year, without any change, without the sight of trees, or verdure, or the faintest vestige of the softness of nature. No streams, or shade, or green thing ever came in their path, but endless and gleaming oceans of sand gathering eternally around them. Is it any wonder, amidst this void of the senses, if people longed at times for an additional enjoyment, to vary the utter monotony of all things around? or, if a repast of meat, or any former indulgence, were desired intensely? Those who live in cooler and better provided climes, can have no idea of the insatiate craving that is sometimes felt in such scenes: it is as much a disease of the imagination as a desire of the appetite. We had a proof of this one evening, on the return from this glen. Having travelled all day in the heat, without any sustenance, we rested, at the close of day, on the bank of a sluggish pool,

that was inclosed by white and sandy banks. Hungry and exhausted, all the materials that remained for a repast, consisted of some fine dry flour : mixing this with the water from the pool, we strove to relish our frugal meal ; but its utter tastelessness and poverty set hunger and weariness at defiance ; and we began to think how welcome and delicious would now be any of the meals that were daily set before us at home, till at last we felt all the pangs of fruitless desire, and would have given all the wealth the Arabs had spared, had a savoury and substantial dish of meat stood before us on the sand.

In the long encampments of months in the deserts of Paran and Sinai, what could be more sad and dreary than the scene, where the tents of a host of many millions were pitched in a soft and glittering sand, environed at times by precipices that cast back the heat and glare of day with double power, instead of affording any relief ? What solace, or amusement existed for their numerous families,

compelled to dwell and pant within the confined inclosure of their tents, or to go forth into the pitiless heat? Even the Bedouins of the present day decline the latter, save when compelled by necessity. The night is the only welcome season; but this is quickly succeeded by the same glaring day, without any relief of rain, or cool and refreshing airs. Is it any wonder that men's hearts, at intervals, forgot their fidelity, and broke into discontent and rebellion? or that their fancies wandered to the rich and fruitful plains of Egypt, and the shores of the Nile, where they had revelled to the full; where the sight and the flow of waters were continually present to the senses?

The conveyance of the myriads of women and children over these inhospitable scenes must have been a source of continual anxiety and fear; even the removal of an Arab camp, with its female and infant population, presents a confused and helpless spectacle, when carried, as they always are, on camels; but the hosts of Israel always marched on foot through those deserts; and in what manner the delicate and

tender could have thus made their way through burning and yielding sands, is inconceivable. And then the horror of extreme thirst, with which they were not unfrequently visited, when there was no appearance of water in sufficient quantity for so vast a multitude! Perhaps there is no physical suffering which so prostrates the mind and heart as this. The angel of death, rushing through the host, could scarcely produce more dismay than the sight of the hopeless, fountainless earth, on which, after a fainting march, every eye sought moisture in vain, and each lip quivered in agony above the fierce soil; while the mother turned to her dying children, and the father saw the wife of his bosom sink beneath the warm blast. In such moments, was faith sufficient to conquer pain and despair? was the sight of the hourly miracle of the pillar, and the flame, of force to quell the terror of the cruelest of all deaths, and fill the soul, that “was dried up within them,” with hope and confidence? It is not in human nature to achieve such triumphs; and the disorder and the misery of soul that so

often broke forth in the camps of Israel, would have been felt by any other nation who were similarly tried.

The region of Paran, in which we now remained, was the place of their rest for a considerable time, and it was from hence the spies were sent that were to search out the promised land. This territory, though less confined than that of Sin, is, in many parts, intersected by numerous ravines and glens, and broken by lofty barriers. Among these, the noble mountain of Paran, with its enormous precipices, was only a long day's journey distant, and was always in sight from the neighbourhood; it is capable of ascent only on the farthest side, and that not without difficulty. Around its base are flat plains of sand, well adapted to large encampments: here and there, at long intervals, a clump of palm-trees is seen, and in their vicinity water is generally found.

Neither of these luxuries had place in our desert dwelling-place; the shadow of the precipices alone was cast there: had the voice of a tempest woke in the night, and swept through

the desolate glen, it would have been a welcome relief to the deathlike silence around. The first sound that broke on our slumbers with the dawn, and strangely at variance with the scene, was the crowing of a cock ; for a few poultry were kept for the indulgence of the chief's wives. So closely was this harbinger of day associated, from early habit, with the ideas of lawns and glades and farm-yards of one's own land, that, on first awakening, it was difficult to believe we were not once more amongst them, and had only to dream a few hours away, and then arise in peace. But the dim vista of sands, seen through the open tent, and the dull precipices, on which the first gleams of light fell, soon chased the pleasant vision away.

In our after progress to the Red Sea, it was a joy to find ourselves in an open wilderness, after being so long cooped up between close and hopeless precipices. The first view of the wide and smooth expanse of water was delightful to the eye, that had rested so long on a dry and parched surface. It was mid-day, and we

hastened to the beach, and gazed on the moveless water, as on an element from which we had long been estranged : but we were soon obliged to relinquish its vicinity ; for the sun's rays beat intensely on the dull shore, and the white and low chalky hills afforded no manner of shelter. We retreated to a small wood, about a mile from the beach, whose half withered leaves and branches afforded a partial shelter, while our camels grazed on the miserable herbage beside. It was a lifeless and stifling spot : no voice or melody of birds ever came here, and the seasons of spring and autumn could not be discerned by any change of foliage, for the same grey dusty hue rested on the leaves throughout the year : the soil consisted of a soft dust, on which we sat, and sought to shroud ourselves, though but partially, beneath the thin branches, exposed all the time to clouds of musquitoes. But when evening came, it brought a welcome change ; a gentle breeze set in from the sea, for whose bank we gladly left our poor resting-place. A question sometimes arises in the traveller's mind, as to where the Israelites could have

found fuel for their numerous sacrifices during their sojourn in these wilds: the few and scattered groves of palm-trees never could have sufficed: it is evident the Jews prized them greatly when met with; for, at the wells of Elim, the very number of palms is given. No small or uncertain supply could have provided the almost ceaseless fires of the altar, or the demands of so many families for their simple process of cooking, or as a guard against the cold and biting winds that often sweep across these deserts in winter. The poorest Arab finds a daily supply of fuel, however scanty, necessary to his very existence: and plucking a handful of shrubs, or drawing forth his little bag of charcoal, he is quickly provided against all discomforts.

The setting of the sun, from the spot where we stood, was very beautiful, although there were neither groves nor vales on which the sinking rays might linger,* but a low and naked shore. But this was not the case on the other side of the sea, to which nature had been more bountiful: the mountains were there bold and

lofty, and the sun was sinking slowly behind them, while his red beams rested on their broken ridges. They were the same amidst which the Israelites were entangled in their flight; and the wilderness on the other side being a sandy expanse, left them at the mercy of their pursuers. It was the divine intention, doubtless, from the first, to destroy the power of Egypt, as the route towards the head of the Red Sea was equally direct and near, and the desert of Sin was then open to the fugitives, without either mountain or wave in the way.

The twilight soon rested on the silent sheet of water, that was not broken by a single bark or vessel from the ports below, as the breeze was too faint to carry them through its uncertain navigation, that abounds with shoals and rocks. The rugged forms of the mountains opposite grew dim and indistinct. No sound broke on the stillness of the beach, on which we now lay down to rest, save the faint murmur of the shallow water; and there was little danger of intruders, for the place was too desert to tempt either the wandering Bedouin or the busy

fisherman. The hours fled almost unperceived ; the scene was full of interest ; and we could not help recalling the description of the famous passage of this sea by the chosen people, that has given rise to so many fruitless doubts and explanations. What a noble subject for a painter, that hour of darkness and terror would be, and the rushing of the hosts through the wild gulf ! It should seem that the absurd idea of representing the waves standing “ like a wall on each side,” had as well be abandoned. This is giving a literal interpretation to the evidently figurative words of Scripture ; where it is said that God “ caused the sea to go back all night, by a strong east wind ;” and when the morning dawned, there was probably a wide and waste expanse, from which the waters had retired to some distance ; and that “ the sea returning to his strength in the morning,” was the rushing back of an impetuous and resistless tide, inevitable, but not instantaneous, for it is evident the Egyptians turned and fled from its approach.

CHAPTER XIII.

MAHMOUD ALI.—TURKISH HOSPITALITY.—
THE EMIR BUSHREER.

THE firm and decisive character of Mahmoud is in nothing more visible than in the perfect security and quietness that reign throughout his dominions. The traveller there, dreams no more of violence or loss than he would do in any town throughout Scotland or Wales: from the capital to the cataracts, every man's hand is at peace with him, and he may ramble along the banks of the Nile with as entire an ease and abandon, ~~as~~ ^{as} those of his native rivers, or in his own garden at home.

The favourite residence of the Prince, out of the city, is his palace of Shoubra; about the beautifying of which and the garden he has

bestowed considerable pains and expense. The latter is extensive and well laid out, partly in the European as well as in the Oriental manner: of the former he is very fond. We were accompanied over it by the guardian, an intelligent man: some parts were in direct violation of Eastern softness and wildness; long gravelled walks, beat quite hard, with little formal borders; a scanty supply of fountain, and no welcome shades from thick and overhanging groves. The whole was too open and bare; flowers and fruit-trees there were in plenty, and small shrubberies: in the centre, however, was a small kiosque, on one side overhung with trees, and the interior laid out with taste and comfort.

It was pleasant to sit in the divaned and gilded apartments, on rich sofas placed around the windows, and look out on the garden around. Mahmoud often sat here, and solaced himself in these cool apartments, which offered an agreeable relief from the sultry heats and stifling lanes of Cairo. Here, it was easy to fancy that you were entirely in the country; though it is not

necessary to come five miles from the city, in order to find solitude: the desolation that spreads close to the walls is sufficiently impressive.

There was one spot in the garden, indicative perhaps of the Prince's habits and taste; it was a kind of alcove, or circular roof, supported by slender pillars, and open in the sides, erected over a deep and elegant marble bath. The roof was of wood, and richly gilded; one or two flights of steps descended into the bath of white marble; over which rose a few steps of the same material, terminating in a seat, in which this voluptuous Prince might solace himself from the cares of empire. He did not retire hither to listen to the wise counsels of his ulemas or muftis; or to discuss with his chief minister the crooked ways of politics; but simply to gaze on his many wives bathing below, while he smoked his rich chibouque. He had eight, of different nations, said to be remarkable; some of them, for their personal charms: their faces and figures were invisible to mortal eyes, save those of their lord and of

their usual attendants. Mahmoud, half a Greek in many of his tastes, though a Roumeliote born, deemed this, however, to be a refinement of taste, that would have better befitted a Sardanapalus, than the wary, restless, and ambitious ruler of Egypt.

The personal appearance of Mahmoud is scarcely worthy of his mind ; his features, except the large eye, being common and unimpressive. In conversation, he is animated and full of intelligence. He is so much attached to some of our European habits, that it was his strong desire, some time since, to have a company of French comedians* brought to Grand Cairo, and established there ; but some of the chief Turks represented that it would be too great a violation of all their feelings and prejudices, and the Pacha dropped his intention.

In the usages of the table he is still an Osmanli ; knives, forks, and other useful appendages, never make their appearance at his meals. About five years since, Sir R — and Lady —, with another female companion, were graciously received by him, and earnestly

invited to dine. But not even in compliance with the taste of his guests would he depart from his own loved *agremens*: the ladies were fairly obliged to dispose of ragouts, sweets, and pillaus, with long and richly ornamented spoons; and Mahmoud, willing to show Lady — particular attention, took a large piece of meat in his hand, and politely placed it before her. Perfectly dismayed at the compliment, and the sight of the savoury piece of meat that rested on her plate, fresh from the princely fingers of the Pacha, she turned to her companion, who was more used to Oriental manners, and earnestly asked what she was to do; “Eat it, to be sure,” was the reply. She looked at the Pacha; his fine dark eye seemed to rest on her with a most kind and complacent expression; and there was no help for it, but to follow the excellent advice given her.

Perhaps the thought might intrude, that the same eye had been bent with ferocious joy on the bleeding heads of all the Mameluke Beys, placed in three pyramids at his feet, but a few years before. This man, who heard

their dying shrieks, from the window of his palace, with the same feeling as the Arab from his sands hears the rush of the Nile—can be gentle as an infant. His manners are particularly mild and kind: he is passionately fond of his children; and it may be inferred from this, that he is affectionate to his wives; at least, rumour has never taxed him with the slightest want of indulgence in this quarter.

While we were in the country, he had a son born; and, resolving to breed him up a hardy soldier and good horseman, he caused him to be taken from the harem in a few weeks, and sent into the interior of the deserts to a great chief of the Arabs, who was his particular friend, with directions, that as he grew up, he should suffer every privation and fatigue in common with the tribe, and be treated with no more favour or indulgence than if he had been a son of the Sheich's. Among his many wives there is, as is generally the case, a more honoured one, called the sultana, either because she is the loveliest, or has brought him the first son; she is now no longer young, but is said to be a

very amiable and generous woman. On occasion of the marriage of one of the consuls with a young and handsome Italian, the sultana made her a wedding present of five cashmere shawls; a splendid present, if the high price, even in this country, as well as exquisite beauty of the shawls, is considered.

The only piece of useless cruelty that Mahmoud is known to have committed, was on a young Frenchman, many years since; the latter was a merchant at Cairo, and, on his way to Alexandria, had been either insulted or assailed by a Turk, so wantonly, that, in self-defence, he had shot him. On his arrival, he was arrested and kept in close confinement by the Turkish authorities, and the Consul at the capital immediately interfered in his behalf. The Pacha knew that he could not refuse to yield to this interference, for he had a great regard for Drouette; but he set off instantly, and travelled with the utmost expedition, arriving at Alexandria in the night, for he was exasperated at the violence committed on one of his subjects. He commanded the unfortunate European to be

brought into his presence, and had him instantly beheaded: he then returned to his capital with the same expedition, where every expostulation and menace came too late.

Prodigal of the lives of his people, to promote any of his favourite plans, Mahmoud did not mind sacrificing a few thousand Arabs in cutting the canal from the Nile to the sea, or rather in reviving and extending the ancient one of Cleopatra. Every hour, from sunrise to sunset, the banks of the river were lined with hosts of those people, toiling hard in the sultry heat, bearing burdens of earth and bricks towards his edifices or improvements. In his plans for disciplining the Nubians, and making regular troops of them, he has succeeded admirably, in spite of the scoffs and ridicule at first thrown out by many of his chief officers. Several detachments of these troops were posted in some of the villages high up the Nile: here they were drilled and exercised with great perseverance by some Turkish and French officers; and it was surprising, that so wild and rude a material should make good soldiers.

The French Colonel Selves, whom we visited in Upper Egypt, where he lived in no small luxury, as far as regarded Eastern enjoyments, found the subsequent part of his career far darker than its commencement. Not long after, his remote and self-indulgent situation here, was exchanged for a path of more peril and privation ; he was ordered to accompany Ibrahim to Greece, with the levies he had been engaged in disciplining. He was wounded in one or two actions, and after lingering some time in neglect and suffering, died of his wounds. With the true facility of a Frenchman, he had adapted himself marvellously to all the habits of the people among whom he dwelt : the town was dirty, mean, and wretched ; his dwelling stood in the suburbs, on the skirts of a wide, flat, treeless plain, scorched by the sun-beams all day long ; and the house was built of wood, and had a poor external appearance : but his dress and appointments were rich and splendid, his horses beautiful, and his harem was said to be so also.

Among other proofs of the Pacha's tolerance,

was the quiet establishment at Cairo of a French baker, who soon made such sad invasions on the trade of the Turkish bakers, that they exclaimed loudly against the infidel, cursed him by their beards, and wondered that any true believer should eat bread prepared by his hands. At last, they went in a body to the Vizier, and complained that they were losing their custom rapidly ; that, in spite of all their remonstrances, the people of the city persisted in eating the Giaour's bread, imagining it was so much better than their own. The Vizier heard his complaint, and directly ordered a cake of the Frenchman's bread to be brought him ; one fresh and crisp from the oven was quickly conveyed into his Excellency's hand : he ate it up with considerable *gout*, and dismissed the complaint, ordering, at the same time, that none but the Frenchman's bread should in future be served at his table.

Some of his taxes were, however, very oppressive : the poor peasantry often complained, that for every date-tree they possessed, they were obliged to pay so many paras a year ; and

that they no longer enjoyed the comfort and plenty of former times. The law respecting sugar was the most arbitrary: every landholder, on whose soil this article was cultivated, was forbidden to dispose of it to any one save the Pacha's agents, who, of course, obtained it at an inferior price. Thus were these agriculturists, many of whom were men of large possessions, deprived of their fair profit, and the whole of the sugar produced in the country was poured into the Pacha's granaries. It might be thought the latter had taken a lesson from the policy of Pharaoh's minister, in time of old, for he is the greatest monopolist living. He has made the selling of sugars to any other person but his agent, punishable with death; and so rigorously is this law enforced, that we sometimes found it difficult, even in the remote towns and villages, to purchase this luxury for our use. In most cases, however, it was possible to obtain it under the rose; and my servant, on entering the little, dark, dirty shop, where the Arab vender, more active than the Turkish, stood behind his wares, and obeyed

every call with the greatest promptitude—after asking for some other articles, spoke of the forbidden commodity in a whisper. The vender directed a sharp, anxious, and inquiring glance at his customer, and paused ere he made any sign of assent; but at last, seemingly satisfied there was no foul play intended, and that honesty and sincerity were stamped on the Frank's countenance, he beckoned mysteriously with his finger: the latter then followed him into a little inner hole, into which the light of day in vain struggled to enter; and here were numerous loaves of white sugar, piled in rows against the wall, securely hidden from Mahmoud's myrmidons. The bargain was soon struck, the money paid, and the Arab's eyes glistened with joy at sight of the gold coin, a price which he knew he could only have obtained from Franks. The forbidden loaves were carefully wrapt in a cloak, which, it might be said, without exaggeration, carried death in its folds; for two Egyptian farmers were seized at a village, near which we were, for no other crime than the selling some loaves

of sugar, at about double the price which the Pacha would have given. They were carried to prison, and it was understood their doom was sealed; the intercessions and prayers of their families and friends were unavailing to procure their liberty; their offers of paying a sum for their ransom had the same success. An account of the transaction was transmitted to the Pacha, from whom it was well known no mercy could be expected, and an order to behead them was every hour anticipated. The poor villagers, in many places, often hid their poultry, eggs, and other necessities, on seeing us enter their neighbourhood, so much had they been exposed to the exactions of the soldiers, on their way through the country to join the army of Ismael in Sennaar.

One morning early, before the sun had attained any power, we left the cangia, and entered a grove of palm-trees on the side that stretched inland: this soon terminated in the naked expanse beyond. The yellow soft sand did not deter us, as the air was delightfully cool, from walking some miles into the interior,

till every trace of verdure had disappeared, and nothing but the loose waves and hillocks rose on every side. On turning round one of the latter, a small Arab camp suddenly appeared, and sounds of alarm and bustle instantly spread on every side, lest an emissary of the Pacha might be approaching. The chief, an elderly man, came up, with a stern aspect, and demanded what we wanted: it was necessary to say something; to have pleaded curiosity would not have been understood; so the purchase of fowls, &c. was stated to be the motive. The Chief disappeared within his tent, and quickly produced store of excellent poultry, that had never seen the light if our demeanour had excited any suspicions. The young women of the hamlet began to gather round, and their free and dark glances had nothing of the slave or the oppressed in them; while the half naked but handsome children shouted and scampered about the hot sand-hills, as if they had been so many soft and grassy banks.

The whole thing exactly resembled an encampment of gypsies in one of the midland

counties of England, save that the thick woods and wild glades, with sunny slopes between, so often their retreats, bore little resemblance to the dreary white hills and frightful solitude that inclosed the Arab wanderers. The black drapery of their tents was fastened with wooden pins to the loose soil; and they had chosen this hollow, as some protection against the furious blasts that sometimes sweep across these sandy wastes. There was here the same *abandon*, however, the same reckless looks and lawless manners, as in the gypsy tribes of our own land; and a like disposition, had occasion offered, to make free with the good things of others. Wandering to and fro across the desert, and changing their place as often as caprice or fancy dictated, but always within reach of the Nile, and its thickly habited border, these people seemed to enjoy life quite as much as their more tranquil brethren of the towns and villages.

Returning hence towards the river, the sand had become hot to the foot, and the sun gleamed with a painful brilliancy on the waving hil-

locks. Of all residences chosen by man on the face of the earth, there is none so frightful as this: cold precipices of rock, and valleys of eternal gloom, such as those where Byron wandered in search of refuge; even the sad and mossy plains and sea-beat homes of the Shetlander are preferable to this glittering and burning resting-place of the Arab. Even their bright dark eyes, particularly of the women, often fail early beneath the incessant glare. Well did the Prophet, whose home of Medina was bare and shadeless, paint the feelings of his countrymen, in filling his paradise with blessed gardens and groves, whose shadow is everlasting; through which the sun cannot pierce, and the murmur of waters alone is heard.

On more than one occasion have our weary steps been cheered by the kindness of the Turk, who spread, it might be said, a table in the wilderness, for the infidel, and offered him the shelter of his roof. One day, as we were looking round in vain for some cottage or hamlet, in which to find refreshment, we heard a voice near us, and a well-dressed and

armed Turk, who had seen our approach, suddenly appeared from behind a slope, and asked, in a friendly tone, what we wanted. "There is a village," he said, "about a mile distant, whence I will order all you want ; but the sun is set, and it is too late now ; so you shall partake of what I have : " and he led the way to his rude dwelling, built of wood, and supported on rough-hewn pillars ; for he had a small body of troops under him in this solitary post. Had these people, barbarians as they are falsely supposed to be, been rapacious, cruel, or bigoted, what was there to hinder them from taking advantage at this moment of two defenceless travellers, in a spot where not another human being could be witness to their deeds ? " I think," said the host, whose manners and feelings were thoroughly those of a gentleman, " that this green bank would be more agreeable to you than the interior of my poor dwelling." Upon which a well-dressed domestic instantly made his appearance, and spread a carpet on the grass.

It was a hushed and solitary scene ; and

twilight, the more precious because it is so transient in the East, now rested upon it. The groves of palm-trees spread darkly on the right, and their tall summits rose silently in the air; no night breeze disturbed their thin foliage. The eminence on which we sat was on a level nearly with the tops of the trees, and looked over the extensive plain on the left and behind: it seemed a far, interminable scene, unbroken by a single hill; but the dim light soon baffled the eye, in the attempt to explore it. In the mean time, the refreshments our host caused to be brought us were most welcome; and exquisitely amused by the novelty of the situation, as well as this unexpected treatment, the night rapidly drew on, and we still lingered on the bank; and could have passed the whole night there with pleasure, for the air was like balm, so deliciously cool and gentle after the fearful heats of the day.

“If you will remain,” said the Turk, “I will have a banquet prepared, and invite a few friends from the neighbourhood to come; for you will like, no doubt, to see the manner of

our meals." We wished it earnestly, but necessity forbade the indulgence. The cottage in which this recluse lived was very homely, with its rude earthen floor, and naked rafters above; the carpet was handsome, but the divan was a hard and rural one, and no fountain gave its murmurs near. Yet the country around was so rich, and the materials for a good repast were so abundant, as far as sheep, eggs, poultry, beef, fruit, and even pastry, went, that there is no doubt the banquet would have been a plentiful and excellent one.

In what Christian land could more generous or unlooked-for kindness be met with, and this without the slightest idea of remuneration, the very mention of which would have been received as an insult from the wandering Giaour? We never heard the word used by these people; for it is not just to say that they hate and despise the Christian on account of his faith; it might have been thus in time past, but not now. "Were we not to keep a strict hand," said the Turkish guardian of the Holy Sepulchre to us, "over the Greeks, Catholics,

and Armenians, their mutual hatred and malice would be always breaking forth, and they would cut one another's throats." And this was perfectly true, not only there, but in other cities also.

The Ottoman may be justly termed a brave and honourable character, a less fierce zealot than the Christians, whose churches rise with impunity and indulgence around the mosque. With him it is impossible, either in sentiment or conduct, to compare the Greek, who is too faithless, pusillanimous, and jealous of his own countrymen, ever to attain or deserve liberty. No where does the traveller feel himself more insecure, or exposed to so many efforts to deceive or overreach him as in Greece: and he will be ready to say, after wandering through the wide East, "Let me fall into the hands of the Ottoman or the Arab, but do not expose me to the tender mercies of the Greek."

A striking instance of the vicissitudes of fortune that peculiarly result from Oriental dominion, was afforded by a potentate whose hospitality we had shared. His power appeared

at that time to be firmly rooted, having endured the secret and open assaults of his enemies for more than thirty years, and grown stronger after every shock. Yet scarcely two years after our visit to his mountain capital, he was not only despoiled of all his dominions, but compelled to take refuge in Egypt, to save his life. The Emir Bushcer began early his career of ambition; inheriting the command of the mountain of Lebanon, which had been for one or two centuries, vested in his family. By his policy and talents he had enlarged his territory, increased his revenue, and brought into the strictest alliance and devotedness to his cause the Shcich Besheer, a powerful military commander. The latter, who was present at the time of our audience, is an elderly man, and plainly dressed; of a robust figure, and martial aspect, strongly contrasted with the slender tranquil figure of his relative the Emir. He is a Druse, and has unbounded influence over all that people; while the latter, being a Christian, can depend only on the people of his own persuasion.

The Emir, however, has made up by craft and intrigue, it may also be said by treachery, what he wanted in actual power, as in the instance where, twenty years since, he caused seven chiefs of an opposite party to be put to death in his own serail. The prince was now between sixty and seventy years of age, and kept a large seraglio, the numerous apartments of which occupy one side of his palace. To beautify this building and its vicinity, he had created a garden on the bare face of the rock, and with much labour made a stream rush down the steep close by. He was said to have several very young and handsome women in his harem: his children, of whom we noticed several in the court of the palace, from three to six years old, and richly habited, were very beautiful. The abode itself is in a dreary situation: cypresses, sycamores, and palms, do not here spread their shade for the fair tenants of the harem to sit beneath, and enjoy their coolness, nor do copious waters fall with a soft murmur.

It is only with great labour that he has pro-

cured, in so high and barren a spot, a confined supply of water : the situation was chosen for its strength, and the naked, grey rocks and shingles that cover every where the face of the mountains, make the whole scene the most unsightly possible.

Repulsive as the aspect of nature is, the same cannot be said of that of the people : the Emir has his choice of some of the finest women in the East. The young Druse females possess a clear and fair complexion, with a rich colour which the Easterns admire so much. Their eyes are mostly blue, and their figures well made and above the common size. The high and rich ornaments fixed on their head, over which their coarse white veil is flung, adds to their appearance. These ornaments are called horns, being of that form, quite straight, and made of silver, adorned with false stones, and carvings of antique figures. They are a foot in length, and are placed upright on the women's heads, being fastened behind and beneath the chin with silk tassels. When the light veil is thrown over this lofty head-appendage, and falls loosely

down on each side the face, it gives to the air and gait of the female a very theatric effect, adds infinitely to a fine tall figure, and much improves a short or faulty one. We purchased one of these horns, which was extremely curious, being of silver, and studded with spangles of different colours, and carvings of figures: the custom is of great antiquity, and is confined wholly to the districts of Mount Lebanon, where it prevails among the Christian as well as Druse women. It affords an illustration, most probably, of that passage in the Scripture, alluding to the haughtiness of the people, "Thou shalt not exalt the horn on high."

The rapacious Emir, who takes advantage of every change, of the times, turned the Greek war to a good account, though so remotely situated from it. A number of Greek families, who resided on the coasts of Asia Minor, and Syria, as well as a few from the Morea, sent much of their valuable property to the monasteries of their faith on Lebanon, as to a fortress and a place of refuge; for the situation of some of these establishments on the heights of the moun-

tain seem to place them out of much danger of attack. Besides, they had always been respected ; and the walls of the convents had never, even in the time of Djazzar, been violated. One reason for this forbearance, was probably, that they contained little worth plundering. The Emir, well informed of the quantity as well as probable value of the deposits sent from different parts to the religious house, watched his opportunity. He had long endeavoured to place himself in allegiance directly with the Porte, whose distant seat of empire would not much annoy his own proceedings, and its protection would add greatly to his security.

He had not been able to effect this; but being now in strict and close alliance with the Pacha of Acre, he affected great zeal for the interests of the Porte, and anxiety that the property of its enemies, sent thus from the seat of war, should be secured for the Sultan: he forthwith sent a body of troops to the monasteries. It was in vain that the superiors and monks made the most vehement protestations against such an outrage and sacrilege; from a

Christian prince too, for such was the noble Emir, having been secretly baptized with all his household, it was shocking. Rich was the spoil and various, and it was borne to the palace on the mountain.

In the small town belonging to him, about a mile distant, we passed a fortnight, with few resources to occupy the time during the wet season. Our apartment was of small dimensions; it had no fire-place, and the windows imperfectly kept out the chill winds that blew at times on this exposed spot. A tall corridor was in front, on whose sloping roof the heavy rains pattered with little intermission, and the small torrents that they formed, rattled down the stony descents of the mountain on every side. At times was heard the loud nasal cry of some wandering dervise or pedlar; or the figures of some of the women of the village, bearing water from the adjoining well, passed in view, their long veils dripping with wet.

We were not without visitors, however, in our apartment: a merchant, who had come from some distant part to sell his wares at the

bazaar, to the various natives of the mountain, came and sat down in the evening, when sunset had bid him close his occupation. A few distressed Greeks were the most welcome; they had fled hither for refuge, and had abandoned their homes to save their heads. So sacred is the protection always afforded by the Druses to the stranger who seeks it, that had the Sultan himself commanded or bribed that these men should be given up, the whole people in the mountain would have risen in arms to defend them.

These refugees did not dare to quit, without peril, their lofty place of retreat for the coasts beneath; they were single men, except one, who had a wife and children. He was a tall, good-looking man, and bewailed bitterly the situation in which he was placed; he wished earnestly to quit the spot, but had not sufficient funds. We relieved his wants in some measure, though to an insufficient extent, to answer his purpose: he resolved, however, to set out soon afterwards with his helpless companions, in order to try to reach the Morea, where they had relatives and friends.

A more fortunate character than the rest of his poor countrymen who had come here, was a young Greek, who had set up a smart coffee-house just at the entrance into the small town. It was by far the handsomest establishment of the kind in the place, and it succeeded remarkably well, for he was dextrous, extremely civil, and had a handsome countenance; and these recommendations, with a constant attention to his guests, soon procured him plenty of custom. He poured out his coffee, which was excellent, to the wealthier visitors, with an air, lifting his hand on high, so as to show the clearness and deep hue of the liquid that fell almost sparkling into the slender cup. It had an excellent flavour, and not a day passed, though the rain poured in torrents, that we did not go to his coffee-house, in one corner of which was a small divan, which he always allotted for our use: the other seats were of wood, with rails. In the court in front was a very fine fountain, of great use in his profession.

This Greek, in his flight from his home, had brought a sum of money, which, though not

considerable, had sufficed to purchase this shop ; and he thought justly that he could not lay out his money to better advantage. His lofty and spacious apartment was more or less filled from morning to night, and its produce seemed as much in request as good old ale at some well-known English inn. The quality as well as variety of guests who resorted here, did not bear a distant resemblance to those of the latter, leaving the wide difference of customs and habits out of the question. As we often lingered in this place for hours, for in truth we were at a loss what to do with our time, we had ample opportunity for observing the company. They were often as different in dress and air as in faith, and in the princes they served. The mountain Drusc, who entered with his light-coloured garments, almost approaching to white, dripping with the shower, and his large boots nearly filled, had come from some remote part of the hills : he saluted that part of the assembly that consisted of his own people, but took no notice of the Christian portion, to whom he bears an inveterate hatred. He withdrew his long pistols from his sash, and placed

them beside him to dry, and taking his cup of coffee, conversed with his countrymen or with the Turks who were seated beside, for the Druses ostensibly profess the Mahometan religion, for the sake of keeping on good terms, and go to the mosque occasionally as well as to their own places of worship. In their hearts, however, they detest it, and keep not one of its ordinances, so that it is mere outward show.

The Turk entered with his garments more dry and tasteful, but dared not look round him with the lordly air with which, in his own land, he would have regarded infidels, for in this town his party is weak and few. He sat himself down composedly, crossed his legs, and spoke scarcely a word. He cast a scowling eye at seeing some Greeks enter, who returned it with a look of bitter hatred, for here they had no cause to fear ; they were welcomed warmly by the landlords, and the full cup was instantly presented to them without a fee.

The appearance and accoutrements of some of the soldiers who were continually passing to and fro, it being war time, was picturesque and martial ; a musquet slung behind, a sabre

and dagger, and often two brace of pistols. As soon as one of these came in, the inquiries as well as converse of the whole assembly directly turned on the news of the army, and of the war. The Turk wished the Pacha of Damascus to prevail, as he was the only chief faithful to the Porte ; the rest of the assembly were in favour of the rebellion, in which their chiefs had all embarked ; and gladly, had they spoken their sentiments, would they have prayed that the crescent might be trampled beneath their feet.

It was curious to observe the effect produced on the company by the loud and distinct call to prayers from the neighbouring minaret of the only mosque in the place. The number of worshippers was very small, and the Muerzin had almost a mere sinecure place of it. Still the observances and hours of devotion were kept up with undeviating strictness. This mosque stood on the very brink of a steep and rocky descent, and the prolonged call rung in every accent through the coffee-house. The Greeks and some of the other Christians did not con-

ceal, their sneers and contempt: a middle-aged man, a fugitive from the Morea, went farther, and mimicked in derision the "Allah bisonillah" of the crier; which, in Acre or Beirout, would have instantly cost him his head.

Another visitor, who came occasionally to our apartment with his long pipe in his hand, was no less a personage than a cook of Lady Hester Stanhope. He was an Arab, and spoke French remarkably well. He served his mistress to the utmost of his culinary as well as interpreting talents, during half the year or more, and was allowed for the remainder to wander forth, and turn them to account wherever his fancy chose. He was now established for some weeks with his son, a fine little boy, on this part of Lebanon, where he supported himself, and made profit besides, by making and selling sweetmeats and pastry. His skill in this branch was by no means ordinary, if one might judge by the specimens he always took occasion to bring with him. He was a shrewd, talking fellow, and had travelled somewhat about the

Haouran, and in Asia Minor, and was well acquainted with the people and the country in which he resided. When he had ended his term of residence among the Druses, whose fondness for cakes and sweets is as great as all the rest of the Eastern people, his intention was to shift his quarters to another spot, where fresh customers as well as change of scene were to be found. The man was a true Arab in his penchant for wandering: the few materials and implements of his trade were easily transported on the back of a donkey, while he himself and his son walked on foot. On his arrival in the place where he intended to fix for a time, his small shop was soon hired, the fire of charcoal kindled, and pastry of various and excellent kinds was soon ready to be devoured by Christian, Druse, Moslemin, or Maronite mouths, for all were to be found in the course of half an hour; and his little boy was useful in carrying them about to those who did not take the trouble to seek them.

In the mean time, the desultory war proceeded, to the advantage of the Emir Busheer

and his ally, the chief of Acre, and it continued so for a considerable time. About twelve months after this period, the Emir was doomed to experience the fickleness of fortune, and drink, in the language of his country, the bitter waters of adversity, which he had so often put to the lips of others. He either carried his wily and crooked policy too far, or did not veil it with his usual caution, but the power he had been so many years in gaining and strengthening, was broken in an instant. The Pacha of Damacus, worsted at first, grew at last too strong to be opposed in the field. His army became so numerous, that the mountain troops of the Emir retired at their approach, and he was obliged to confine himself entirely to the defensive. The strength of his position, in the very heart of Lebanon, had always set his enemies at defiance; but the hostile chief was resolved, if possible, to crush an enemy that had long been a thorn to his pashalic, and whose intrigues and robberies had often sorely annoyed him. Had the Pacha of Acre been faithful to his alliance with him, the Druse Prince might have con-

tinued to defy his enemies ; but he deserted him, having made his peace with the power of the Porte. His own troops, too, did not behave with their wonted spirit. The celebrated Sheich Busheer, the military commander, who was his relative, wavered in his attachment, and relaxed his efforts of defence. The Turkish troops made good their advance on the mountain, in passes where a band of resolute mountaineers might have defied a host ; and the Emir, in the decline of his life, was obliged to fly from his palace at Beteddein, where we had lodged about a year previously, in order to save his life. He had taken great pride in this edifice, which was built after his own taste, in some parts in the European style. It had cost him a great deal of money, and in the erection had taken many years. Still he was not so deserted, but that a small body of troops, sufficient for a formidable guard, continued near him, and he was enabled to carry off in his flight his numerous and youthful harem, his splendid arms, and his property, at least such part as consisted of money : for his rapacity of

late years had enabled him to accumulate no inconsiderable treasures. The Christian part of his mountain subjects saw his exile with much regret, as he had embraced their faith; the Druses with less, and the Moslem portion with undissembled pleasure. He had been warned repeatedly for some time previously, and by one of his best and most highly esteemed friends, to beware of the change that affairs were about to take, and which would probably be fatal to him.

Sir S. Smith, whom he adores, having been much in his society, at the time of the celebrated Acre defence, and with whom he has since corresponded, wrote him several letters, filled with the most friendly and useful counsel, pointing out the danger of his situation, and advising him not to persist in a war that must soon be too formidable for his resources, but to make his peace betimes with the Porte, whose power he was resisting in the person of the Pacha of Damascus. It warned him also to mistrust the friendship of the chief of Acre, who was as inconstant as the wind, and would

desert him as soon as his own interests demanded it. No advice could have been better, or more truly followed by the results it had predicted; and the unfortunate Emir saw too late that he had calculated too sanguinely on long and continued success. Had his illustrious friend been nearer to him, these disasters had probably been averted: the personal intercourse of Sir Sydney would have been as a beacon to the chief, who speaks of him with greater enthusiasm and regard than he does of any other earthly being; and his interference, still so highly revered by the Eastern chiefs, might have obtained somewhat better terms for his old associate. The Emir fled, however, with precipitation to the coast, and succeeded in embarking, with his companions, on board ship, and sailed instantly for Alexandria. Mahmoud Ali he had known many years before; and he trusted that he would not only grant him an asylum in Egypt, but afford him his protection to reinstate him in power. It is but rarely that one dethroned prince can look for such services at the hands of another, who is in

the fulness of his power, and, above all, in countries where treachery and deceit, with the rulers, are the order of the day.

The Emir was not deceived: he came to Egypt, and then went to Cairo, and hastened to testify his acknowledgments to Mahmoud, and to request that the light of his countenance might shine upon him. It was a moment, no doubt, of deep suspense to the exiled man, who knew not how this formidable prince might receive him: it depended on the caprice of the moment, whether he chose to send his head as an offering to the Porte, or to treat him as a friend and guest. It was a fine trait in Mahmoud's character that he did the latter, without the least hesitation, for it was contrary to his interests. He received the poor Emir kindly and honourably; assured him of his friendship and countenance, and bade him dismiss all his fears. The fugitive did not, as in ancient times, appeal to the household-gods of his host; for he knew well there were none revered within the walls of the palace, neither god nor prophet, save those which he had

brought with him in the form of money, in the idolatry of which, and the eagerness to amass it, they both cordially agreed.

Mahmoud assigned him a habitation suitable to his rank, and the Emir found himself more fortunately situated than he could have anticipated; in perfect safety as to his person and property, and confident of the good-will of the despot, whose slightest word was absolute, either for life or death. Could he have divested himself of ambition, he might have passed his days as happily and far more tranquilly than in his mountain empire. He had his wives and children, and servants, and was freed from the cares and distractions of governing. But the Emir had felt, no doubt, like many greater and still more unlucky men, that the sweetness and the habit of power are hard, very hard to be laid aside or forgotten. When he rode through the streets of Cairo, he missed the universal obeisance paid him on Lebanon. Then the delight of taxing and squeezing money from his various subjects—the plundering excursions—the bribes from the Arab Shiech to the wary

chief for his aid and countenance—these were all gone ; and the loss fell heavily. To the tenants of his harem, no doubt the change from the bleak, windy, and cheerless heights of Lebanon, where they scarcely ever went from their apartments, to the attractions and excitements of a capital city, was welcome and joyous.

The Emir, though between sixty and seventy years of age, was as restless and dissatisfied as if the days of his youth were come back ; and the path of ambition was as inviting as ever. He continued to solicit his protector to fulfil his promises, and to enable him to return to Syria with an armed force, in order to try to regain his dominions ; but the other had not yet come to this decision. He always received his visits with great respect and attention, made him sit beside him, and take coffee, and smoke the chibouque in all amity and good fellowship. Perhaps he was cautious of taking so open and decided a step, as to reinstate a Prince expelled by the officer of the Porte, or was deterred by the expense of the measure.

The Emir, still living on promises, and

building on hopes, was seen at Cairo a few years since by the companion of my journey, who had partaken of his hospitality in his mountain-palace in the time of his prosperity. True to his old system of ever sailing with the stream, he had quite forgotten that he was a strict Christian in his own dominion: at the capital of his protector, he is a rigid Mussulman, goes faithfully to the mosque, and squares his looks and gestures accordingly. Respecting the copy of the 'New Testament which he received from a zealous missionary, and promised to peruse, it is not known whether he rescued it from the ruin of his effects; but it is very doubtful if his zeal was so warm as to bring it to the land of his refuge.

Not long after this, fortune again smiled on this fugitive Prince: a favourable opportunity for his return, as he thought, was afforded, amidst the changes of Eastern warfare; and with the concurrence of his protector, he set sail once more for his mountain territory.

CHAPTER XIV.

A FORTUNATE RENEGADE.—ARMENIAN BISHOP.—THE APOCRYPHA.

A MAN of far more lowly station, but of happier fortune, than the fugitive Prince, resided at this time at Cairo, which he is not likely to quit, while his lease of life endures. He was a native of the North, and had now been twelve years settled at Cairo; having originally served as a common soldier in the last unfortunate expedition, and been taken prisoner, with many others, by the combined Turks and Mamelukes. He fell into the power of one of the former, and found himself in the condition of a slave, and compelled to

hard labour and harder fare. His master was not an indulgent one, and sometimes ill-used and threatened his captive, in order to induce him to change his religion; and at last, having no hopes of a ransom, or otherwise bettering his condition, Osman consented: he took the turban, abjured his faith, and was instantly freed from slavery. Perhaps a sigh accompanied the surrender for ever of his Scottish name; it might be that of an ancient clan, among whom, in his native glens, he had once lived in peace, and never dreamed he should be a follower of Mahomet in a strange land.

However this may be, the former captive quickly found a prodigious change in his situation: he began to set up for himself, picked up the language very rapidly in his various jobs and dealings, and soon after had the good fortune to be taken into the service of the English Consul, and was in a short time promoted by him to the office of secretary, or rather superintendent of the details as well as domestics of the household. He proved himself a shrewd, useful man, who, without neglecting

the interests of his patron, took care of his own. He now wore a highly respectable dress *à la Turque*; a white turban and scarlet robe, with a small ataghan in his sash; and his highland face was very tolerably disguised, yet not so much so but that its ancient features, the ruddy hue, the bright blue eye, and the fiery curls adorned it still, and seemed to triumph over all the wasting clime of Cairo. In spite of all his efforts, he succeeded but faintly in moulding his features into that solemn gravity, that air of profound contemplation, in which the Turks excel: his light eye, whether in the street or the dwelling, wandered to and fro with a restless, cautious, yet good-humoured expression, that showed the character of the man; ever on the watch to turn any thing to advantage, yet retaining, amidst his relapse, the warm and kindly feelings of his native land. Ingenious and indefatigable, he prospered greatly in temporal things, and soon saw that the banks of the Nile were a better place for getting a fortune, for one who knew how to go about it, than among his own lochs or heath-

covered mountains. True, a pang would sometimes shoot across his mind about his apostacy, for he had received a good and strictly religious education in his own country; but he had no choice: on one hand was slavery and hard treatment; on the other, comfort and bright prospects; and by degrees these twinges of conscience wore away. He always proved a most useful agent to travellers, in executing their commissions, and in making purchases; his knowledge of the habits and language of the people, and of the best way how to deal with them, were of great advantage to him.

In this way things went amazingly well with the Scotchman; fortune seemed to take a pleasure in dealing handsomely with him; for riches increased, and with them came houses and wives, and divers substance. He lived in the Turkish quarter of the city, as behoved him, among his new brethren; and this was necessary for the credit and sincerity of his faith. He went also to the mosque, often enough to prove that he was a true believer; for he had learned the usual prayers by heart, and was ac-

customed to the various exclamations, ejaculations, and gestures necessary to be gone through.

Osmin had by this time purchased two houses, in one of which he resided, and let the other. He was also possessed of two wives: his *menage*, however, being situated in the Ottoman quarter, was seldom intruded on by Franks. To all appearance, he was perfectly content with his situation, and seldom cast a longing, lingering look behind to the land of “lang syne,” for the very sufficient reason, probably, that there was no hope or encouragement for him at home. He had come out a common soldier, a native perhaps of some far inland glen, or some breezy and shingly hillside—and was now a substantial, thriving citizen.

There was more sense than zeal perhaps in the reply he made to the repeated efforts of a missionary, to induce him to turn from his apostacy, and go back to the country and the religion of his fathers. Osmin listened with earnestness to his expostulations, and appeared

to feel their power and truth : his countenance lost its calmness, and a tear seemed ready to start forth ; but Mammon, in this moment, prevailed. “ In Scotland,” said Osmin, “ I shall be a poor man ; and here, I am a gentleman.” He knew that he must have left all his pleasant possessions, gardens, houses, and children, and landed on his native shore as penniless and friendless as when he set out ; and the alternative was too bitter. At present, he is in a fair way of making a sufficient fortune, with which, if he chooses, he can return in the decline of his years to his “ ain land,” and rear a new dwelling where the shieling of his father stood, or purchase the old mansion of some decayed laird.

But this will never be the case : the habits of the land are rooted too firmly in his heart : it would be as easy for him now to put aside the turban for the bonnet, and the flowing robe for the kilt, as it was to assume them in the first place ; he might become a grave, well-ordered, home-dwelling man, and let his locks, that are now reduced to a solitary one on

the crown of the head, fall reverently on his shoulders; the dignified and solemn worship of the mosque might also be gladly laid aside for the simple and sincere Presbyterian service. But the many luxuries and indulgences of the East, the love of gain, and the habit of acquiring it, have woven their web too closely round the soul, and time will not tear it thence.

The Scotchman, however guilty, was more sincere in his professions than a native dignitary to whom we were commissioned to pay a visit not long before, in the Turkish capital. He was an Armenian bishop, who had arrived lately from the interior; and of his purity of intention, as well as learning, a good opinion had been formed. It was thought he would make a very useful agent to spread the copies of the Scriptures in his remote diocese; and to this he had willingly consented. He lodged in one of the most retired streets, or rather lanes, of the city: passing through a small court, and ascending a lofty flight of steps, we entered his apartments. He might have claimed the praise of apostolic simplicity and freedom from

all ostentation ; but it was difficult to discover any thing episcopal, according to preconceived notions, in his abode or style of living. He resided in two small chambers, one of which served to sleep in, and the other was covered with books, that were scattered confusedly on the floor. He was a mild and pleasing-looking man, of middle age ; with the appearance of having borne his share of the buffets and blows of the world. As there was but one chair in the apartment, we could not, in spite of his entreaties, exclude the dignitary from his lonely seat, and we accommodated ourselves on some trunks that stood on the floor. He had lived some months, he said, in the city, into the streets or dwellings of which he never went, employing all his hours in reading. A great number of works in various languages appeared on every side, and his reputation for learning was no doubt justly merited. His diocese was situated at a distance of two hundred miles in the interior, and afforded him, by no means, an abundant income. It lay amidst the mountains, where the territory was poor, and his

flock widely scattered over it, residing chiefly in villages and hamlets ; but as the necessities of life were abundant, and the manner of living simple, he was enabled to support his condition respectably. He had performed this long journey, to see and confer with his countrymen in the city, and also, perhaps, from a desire of change. He entered willingly into the plan for conveying a large number of copies of the Scriptures to his own territory, and engaged that they should be diligently circulated, as very many of his people had not the volume in their possession, and had no means of procuring it. He dwelt on the great advantages that would result from the measure in so remote a part of the country, and ended by demanding a round sum for the trouble he should be at in the matter.

We were altogether confounded at finding the worthy and learned dignitary bent on filthy lucre, before he would take any step for the good of his people. We attempted to reason with him on the subject, and told him, that the service ought to be disinterested, as the books

were to be a free gift, and those who presented them sought no remuneration for their exertions or expense. The Armenian was, however, staunch to his purpose, and in a calm tone assured us he could not engage in the business, unless he received the sum demanded. With a far lower opinion of his religion and sincerity than when we first entered his apartments, we rose and took our leave.

The bishop was not singular in his view of the subject ; it was fortunate, perhaps, that he disclosed it so soon, as, had he been intrusted with any funds, he would probably have transferred them, like the noted Gearvé, to his own enjoyment. This wily Syrian proved an overmatch for the credulity of the people of England, from whom he reaped a golden harvest. This unprincipled voluptuary still lives in great comfort, and even luxury, on the fruits of his consummate art, and very prudently keeps aloof from any of the agents of the Bible Society who visit the East ; and they also do not go near the retired dwelling or garden of the impostor.

The resolution so decidedly adopted of late,

as to the form in which the Scriptures are to be circulated in the East, cannot but excite some surprise. It has been determined by the Bible Society that the Apocrypha shall be excluded, with as much eagerness as if some strange and malicious influence lurked in its contents; and a fierce dissension has arisen on this subject, between the many branches of the Institution. To such an extent has this been carried, that a great many societies have separated from the parent body, and have declared they will hold no farther intercourse with it. This affords one of the most striking instances of a noble cause being broken to pieces by the folly and frivolity of the actors that has ever been exhibited. The pious and benevolent purposes of this gigantic Society, whose power and stability all thought were immortal, and whose arms embraced the utmost extent of the earth in their grasp, have been miserably thwarted by dissensions arising out of a question of no vital importance.

If a residence of some time in the different countries of the East, and an observation of

their character and taste may allow a judgment to be formed, it would be, that the exclusion of the Apocrypha from the Sacred Volume will be an injury to the usefulness as well as delight which it is calculated to impart. The beautiful and impressive relations which form so large a portion of the forbidden books, are admirably adapted to attract and fix the feelings of Orientals of all classes, who prefer the inculcation of moral and religious sentiments in the form of narrations, to any other. From the first ages they have been attached to this species of composition, above all others, and it often exercises an exclusive and indelible influence on their heart and memory. It is trite to say, that it was frequently resorted to in the Old and New Testaments, in order to impress on the lively imaginations of the hearers the sublimest sentiments and the most awful truths. Where, then, is the wisdom of excluding with vehemence, and almost with aversion, this series of admirable writings, whether in the form of tales, or of moral and pious counsels, which, from their figurative dress,

would be listened to with delight and profit by the sanguine and mercurial Orientals? The Arab in his tent, the Sÿrian in his cottage, and the Wahabite also, perhaps, on his endless sands, would recall and dwell on narratives such as these, when the warnings, the discourses, and the promises of the Sacred Volume would have made a fainter impression.

Tradition also would aid the effect: it is still remembered that the mountain of Bethulia was rendered illustrious very long ago, by the faith and heroism of a beautiful and devoted woman; and other parts also may in the same manner be enshrined in a country where the lapse of ages does not efface the things of old. The same sands which sweep away some of the finest parts of the Sacred Writings, retain with caution and jealousy the "Song of Solomon." It is possible for a recluse, who had wrestled for years in the solitudes of the Thebais, or in the monastic retreats of St. Saba, or Sinai, to discover only a religious meaning in this composition; but such will not be the case with the ardent and impassioned Orientals in

general, who will judge only by images and expressions. They will discover too close a resemblance between this address, which was probably meant only for an earthly object, and the compositions of their own Saadi and Hafiz, whose glowing images of female beauty are so often drawn from flowers, and spices, and gardens of delight.

It has been said, " Evil be to him who evil thinks ;" and in our refined and discriminating countries, where the pure flower is plucked even from the most unpromising soil, the saying may hold good ; but not so to men whose imaginations have ever outstepped their judgment, and who dwell less on the hidden and difficult meaning of a subject, than on the rich and glowing garb in which it is arrayed. This great question, however, convulses and paralyses the efforts of a glorious institution, which gathers nobles and dignitaries, orators and writers, all of note, under its banners. From the interior of Scotland to the end of the last Western province, the theme is agitated, discussed, revolved, and, balanced, under every

but diversified assemblage was gathered : a few Germans from the banks of the Danube—one or two apostate Scotchmen, who had come to listen to the truth that they had abjured—two or three unbelieving Jewish traders—a Slavonian, and some Christian travellers. The novelty of this little assembly in one of the narrow and burning streets of Cairo, in which the name of the Prophet alone was heard in reverence, and the call of the Muezzin from the Mosques was mingled with the discordant cries at intervals of soldiers, camel-drivers, and Arabs, was not a little striking. It brought to mind, in spite of its want of solemnity, calmer and sweeter moments, in the stillness of a Sabbath morning, in another and better land—in the lonely house of prayer on the hill-side, or in some wild vales opening on the shore.—One of the Scotchmen seemed to feel this remembrance also, for, in spite of his handsome turban and robe, the tear stood in his eye ; but it was only a passing emotion.

This simple and secret service in the city, was far less impressive than on similar occa-

sions in the wilderness, where the enthusiasm of the same missionary was more strongly excited, and his fancy kindled by surrounding objects. Often, during our journey in the regions of Sinai, when we encamped at the close of day, he requested we would consent to join in his evening service, that was offered in the open air; and this service derived all its passing interest from the deep calmness of the hour, the glory of the evening sky, and the agreement of the famous places around, and their traditions, with the character and objects of the man—with his taste and passion also, it might be said, for even while he prayed, and spoke of the excellences of Christianity, it was evident that his mind was often wandering to the ancient glories of his people, and the displays of divine power in their favour. Sinai had infinitely more power over his imagination and his feelings than Calvary: to a man descended from Jewish ancestors, and bred in their faith, the whole region of this mountain is enchanted land.

One evening, we took a solitary walk through the plain, if the expression may be used, for its

dimensions are very small, where it is supposed the host of Israel was encamped. The soil was a soft sand, and the barrier of mountains that inclosed it, very steep and rocky. In the middle, and opposite to the valley that conducts to Horeb, is a hill, on which tradition says, that Aaron reared the first altar, and offered the first sacrifices, after the flight from Egypt: it is still called by his name: it is much lower than the neighbouring eminences, the ascent of which offers difficulties too formidable for such a ceremony. The sandy soil was still warm to the foot after the heat of the day; and the air was mild and delightful: this had seldom been the case during our journey, for the sharp blasts of the night are more to be dreaded during this season than the mid-day sun: the pits which are found dug in the sand are sometimes a shelter to the Arabs from the fury of the winds, that will not suffer the tents to stand. This may be one reason why the people of Israel encamped so long and often in inclosed valleys, and amidst ranges of lofty mountains, rather than in open, exposed,

and extensive plains. In the night, these declivities and wild precipices were a protection from the winds, that often, with the force of hurricanes, sweep every thing before them; and the friendly shadow cast by the rocks during the day would be a shelter from the fierceness of the heat.

In one of the most rugged parts of the way from the mountain of Sinai to Horeb, is a grotto, or cave, said to be the same as that in which Elijah sought shelter when he fled from the revenge of Jezebel; the journey on foot of “ forty days”* from the region of Samaria, would have brought him to the vicinity of this Mount. The neighbourhood, the scene, its perfect wildness and loneliness, all favour the truth of the tradition; and it is beautiful when Nature, that can never change in such a land, comes thus in aid of our willing belief. We had passed this spot in our difficult and tedious descent from Sinai, in order to proceed to the neighbouring mountain: “ the cave in

which the prophet lodged,* is as desolate a place of refuge as the fancy can conceive,—one to which neither the revenge of woman, nor the cruelty of man, would ever dream of pursuing its victim: no tree gives its shade—no brook or pool is nigh to quench the burning thirst—not a shrub grows on the savage soil; but sad and useless precipices are seen on every side. Every part of the way was strewed with broken fragments of rocks, over which our passage offered a useful trial of patience, for the sun's heat fell pitilessly on our heads.

It is singular, that a considerable part of this tract is covered with shivered pieces of rock and cliff, as if the words still allowed a literal fulfilment,—“a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks”† It is a spot in which discontent and sadness might easily gather on the spirit, even of the most tried and faithful; the more so, when utter loneliness was combined with the fearful and melancholy aspects of nature, so different here,

1 Kings, xix. 9.

† Ibid. xix. 11.

from the beautiful solitudes of Samaria, which the fugitive prophet had just quitted.

We sat down on the rocks, wearied and exhausted by thirst as well as fatigue; and our Arab guide said there was no water nearer than the valley to which we were going. Our companion wished to retrace his steps to the monastery, but fear of some violence by the way deterred him:—though no foot of an enemy was to be apprehended in these elevated solitudes:—but he longed earnestly for his soft and quiet cell, and his books, and to ruminate over his projects of conversion. Behind us rose the heavy and massive summit of Sinai, resembling more, if the loftiest thing may be compared with small, the appearance of many embattled towers, than a mountain peak: in front, and at a short distance, was the sharp and beautiful point of Horeb, towering far above every other summit: we saw these scenes only beneath the serenest sky and the loveliest atmosphere possible. When the tempest thickens around them, with the thunder and lightning that sometimes prevail here, it is

easy to imagine that the effect must be awful and terrific in the extreme.

This cave of Elias is the only one in this vicinity, and is of small dimensions: it is difficult not to be struck with the different manner and appearance of the divine miracles, according to the land in which they were vouchsafed:—in Palestine, these visitations were mild, and gentle, though resistless: the power of the elements was seldom used to aid the impression on the spirit and senses: but in this sad and savage wilderness, this land of terrors, the tempest, the fire, and the earthquake usually accompanied the messages of God.

In returning, towards the close of the following day, through the glen beneath, we passed by the spot where the good fathers who have lived in these retreats assert that the golden calf was cast into the water: it is a small natural basin in the solid rock, and the convenience of the locality has probably been the cause of the tradition. However this may be, it was a welcome one to us, for we stopped to drink of it, as it is the only place, for a long way, where water was to be met with.

To the foot of the pilgrim, one scene of his tradition, or his belief, may be as welcome as another; we would, however, gladly have exchanged our visit to 'this pool in the rock, for a sight of the celebrated Waters of Mara, which stand in the middle of the desert of the same name, that adjoins that of Paran.

We afterwards passed within a few hours' journey of this water, but were not aware of it at the time. The Pool of Mara is of a circular form, about sixty feet round: it gushes forth from a rock at the foot of a barren mountain, and one or two palm-trees spread their shade over it. This pool, the only one found for a great distance around, in spite of its clear and tempting appearance, is brackish and bitter to the taste, offering one of the greatest disappointments to the weary traveller, whose 'thirst indeed may be quenched, though the hope of a sweet and delicious draught is baffled.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

